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# MUSLIMS *AND THE* CONGRESS

BEING  
A SYMPOSIUM OF ADDRESSES OF THE  
MUSLIM PRESIDENTS OF THE CONGRESS  
FROM 1885 TO 1940

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

*By*

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To the Sacred Memory  
OF  
Maulana Faqir Mazhar-ul Huq

*Who Was*

The Beacon Light of Nationalist Muslims of India,  
The Real Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity,  
The Open Foe of Communalism in Every Form & Shape,  
The True Champion of Nationalism in India,  
The Sincere Congressman To the End of His Life.

**REZAUL KARIM.**

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## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

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## PREFACE

The object of this compilation is to show to the communally-minded people that the Indian National Congress is not a Hindu organisation. Men like Mr. Jinnah, Mr. Fazlul Huq, Mawlana Akram Khan, Mawlana Zafar Ali Khan, were once the devoted workers of the Congress. They have left the Congress on political ground. When the Congress gave up for ever the beaten track of prayer, petition and protest, and boldly adopted a policy of direct action through Non-co-operation and Civil-Disobedience movement, the moderate leaders did not like the new technique of struggle that the Congress had adopted. Therefore they gave up the Congress, and to save their position from public ridicule they created a communal platform wherefrom they began to hurl thunder against the Congress. Not only the Muslim leaders, even many Hindu leaders left the Congress on similar grounds. Some of them joined the moderate party and others took active part in fomenting communalism in the country. How could the Congress be called a Hindu organisation when Muslims, Christians and Parsis were elected as President of the Congress ? Even to-day in spite of virulent attack of the League leaders, the Congress can claim as many as several millions of Muslims as its active members, workers, and supporters. .

The Muslim Presidents of the Congress were all responsible

public men, and were esteemed by members of both the communities. Their presidential addresses are monuments of national idealism. It is necessary that these addresses being collected in one volume should be read over again, not only by every nationally-minded Indian, but also by the communally-minded people of the country. In many of these addresses the readers will find an emphatic refutation of the charges of communalism against the Congress. Mr. Rahmatullah Sayani, the 12th President of the Congress took up item by item, all the charges of the then Muslims against the Congress and had most emphatically refuted them. What he told 45 years ago holds good even to-day. From the addresses of the Muslim Presidents of the Congress the readers will find the following five things : (1) a full conception of Nationalism ; (2) total refutation of the idea of Pakistan ; (3) belief in the possibility of Hindu-Muslim unity ; (4) principle of the safe-guards of Muslim interests as consistent with National interest ; and (5) condemnation of communalism in all forms. The Muslim Presidents knew fully well that the charges against the Congress were mere pretext to avoid the real issue and therefore they did not emphasise on the noxious principle of communalism. The more we will strengthen the Congress, more it will serve the cause of liberty, and the cause of the country. I hope my countrymen, especially my brethren-in-faith would be benefitted by perusal of the addresses of the Muslim Presidents of the Congress.

## LIST OF CONGRESS PRESIDENTS

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Presidents</i>               |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| 1885        | W. C. Bannerjee—Bombay          |
| 1886        | Dadabhai Naoroji—Calcutta       |
| 1887        | Badruddin Tayabji—Madras        |
| 1888        | G. Yule—Allahabad               |
| 1889        | Sir W. Wedderburn—Bombay        |
| 1890        | Sir Phirozsha Mehta—Calcutta    |
| 1891        | Ananda Charlu—Nagpur            |
| 1892        | W. C. Bannerjee—Allahabad       |
| 1893        | Dadabhai Naoroji—Lahore         |
| 1894        | A. Web—Madras                   |
| 1895        | Surendranath Banerjee—Poona     |
| 1896        | M. R. Sayani—Calcutta           |
| 1897        | Sir Sankaran Nayar—Amraoti      |
| 1898        | Anandamohan Bose—Madras         |
| 1899        | R. C. Dutt—Lucknow              |
| 1900        | Sir N. G. Chandravarker—Lahore  |
| 1901        | D. E. Wacaha—Calcutta           |
| 1902        | Surendranath Banerji—Allahabad  |
| 1903        | Lalmohan Ghose—Madras           |
| 1904        | H. E. A. Cotton—Bombay          |
| 1905        | G. K. Gokhale—Benares           |
| 1906        | Dadabhai Naoroji—Calcutta       |
| 1907        | Rashbihari Ghose—Surat          |
| 1908        | Rashbihari Ghose—Madras         |
| 1909        | Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya—Lahore |
| 1910        | Sir W. Wedderburn—Allahabad     |
| 1911        | Bisan N. Dhar—Calcutta          |
| 1912        | R. N. Mudhalkar—Bankipore       |
| 1913        | Nawab Syed Mohammad—Karachi     |
| 1914        | Bhupendra Nath Basu—Madras      |

|      |                                      |
|------|--------------------------------------|
| 1915 | S. P. Sinha—Bombay                   |
| 1916 | Ambika Charan Majumdar—Lucknow       |
| 1917 | Annie Besant—Calcutta                |
| 1918 | Syed Hasan Imam (special)—Bombay     |
| 1918 | Pt. M. M. Malaviya—Delhi             |
| 1919 | Pt. Motilal Nehru—Amritsar           |
| 1920 | Lala Lajpat Rai ( special )—Calcutta |
| 1921 | C. V. Raghavacharya—Nagpur           |
| 1922 | Hakim Ajmal Khan—Ahmedbad            |
| 1923 | Chittaranjan Das—Gaya                |
| 1924 | Abul Kalam Azad ( special )—Delhi    |
| 1925 | Mohammad Ali — Coconad               |
| 1926 | M. K. Gandhi—Belgaum                 |
| 1927 | Sarojini Naidu—Cawnpore              |
| 1928 | Srinivas Ayengar—Gauhati             |
| 1929 | M. A. Ansari—Madras                  |
| 1930 | Motilal Nehru—Calcutta               |
| 1931 | Jawaharlal Nehru—Lahore              |
| 1932 | Vallabhbhai Patel—Karachi            |
| 1933 | Ranchoodas Amritlal—Delhi            |
| 1934 | Mrs. Sengupta—Calcutta               |
| 1935 | Rajendra Prasad—Bombay               |
| 1936 | Jawaharlal Nehru—Lucknow             |
| 1937 | Jawaharlal Nehru—Faizpur             |
| 1938 | Subhas Chandra Bose—Haripur          |
| 1939 | Subhas Chandra Bose—Tripuri          |
| 1940 | Abul Kalam Azad—Ramgarh              |

## INTRODUCTION

### CONGRESS IS A NATIONAL ORGANISATION

The bold claim of the Indian National Congress that it is the representative organisation of the entire nation of Indians has recently been challenged by the communally-minded leaders of the country. The vested interests, the landlords, the capitalists and the communal parties who have now combined together to frustrate all the attempts of the brave soldiers of freedom, have thus given the British Government a handy opportunity to deny freedom to us.

The Congress is a national organisation whatever Mr. Jinnah might say against the claim. Fifty four years ago when it took its birth it was as national as it is to-day when all the communities of India have joined it in their thousands and tens of thousands. Was it not national when Mr. Jinnah's loud voice was heard on its platforms? Was it not national when men like Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. Hume, Moulana Mohammed Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Mr. Budruddin Tyabji and Mr. Rahmatullah Sayani occupied the Presidential chair of the Indian National Congress? To-day why should it become less national than before? Is it because Mr. Jinnah has thought fit to abandon it, or is it because that the Congress has adopted a more vigorous programme of action? The Congress has thrown away the begging bowl with which it had formerly approached the British Government and adopted a manly and moral principle for the attainment of its goal. Instead of adopting a policy of prayer, petition and protest, the Congress has invented a new kind of weapon to attain the goal of independence. The moment it adopted a vigorous policy, many of the time-serving and arm-chair politicians gave up the Congress. Is it for this reason that the Congress loses its national character and can be converted into a communal organisation? Certainly it does not represent those who do not want to fight for India's freedom. It represents those who have dedicated their lives to the cause of motherland. It does not matter whether they are Hindus or the Moslems, provided its aims and policies are national. The Congress will not be degenerated into a



communal organisation, even if its entire machinery were guided and controlled by the Moslems alone or the Hindus alone.

The Congress does not represent the sectarian interests of any particular community. The Hindu Mahasabha says that the Congress does not represent Hindu interests ; the Moslem League says that it does not represent the Moslem interests ; the moderates, the princes, and other vested interests say that it does not represent their interests. Whom does it then represent ? If so many organisations and persons go out of it, then what is its position in the country ? The fact is that those who challenged the national character of the Congress, have failed to make distinction between the religious or sectarian interests and national interests. The Congress being a national organisation, cannot and does not represent the Hindus as Hindus or the Moslems as Moslems. It represents the people of India as Indians, as citizens of the country, not as Moslems or Hindus. The Congress cannot take up the duties of Islam, or Hinduism or of Christianity, or of other religions of the world and be converted into a religious propaganda-organisation like the Islam Mission of Woking Mosque or the Arya Mission of the Punjab. Its duties and obligations are different from these missionary institutions. It is the symbol of the political aspirations of the country and the nation. It is the nerve-centre of the entire body politic of the nation. It will be mistaken to suppose that the Congress is the custodian of the Hindu interests as such, or the Moslem interests as such. No, it is not that ; it is the custodian of the rights of Indians and so all the Indians who are politically slave will find in it a most hospitable shelter for the fulfilment of thier hopes and aspirations. If an Indian Moslem is persecuted abroad, the Congress does not neglect his cause on the ground that he is a Moslem, nor does it give any additional stress on a persecuted Hindu on the ground that he is a Hindu. The Indian problem of South Africa is almost a Moslem problem ; similarly the problem of the Zanzibar Indians is a Moslem problem, for which the Moslem League had done nothing. But the cause of those Moslems has been taken up by the

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Congress in right earnest, because it is an Indian problem, through and through. But the Congress has nothing to do with the Islamic Mission, or the Christian Mission or the Hindu Mission. A Congress Moslem or a Congress Christian is competent to take up that cause like any other man. But in the name of the Congress nothing can be done which is purely religious or sectarian. In its eyes there is no difference between Moslem interest or Hindu interest. It looks to Moslem interests with as much care and caution as to Hindu interests. It watches with perpetual vigilance the political and economic interest of the country. Its aim is not to preserve the Hindu interest or the Moslem interest as such. It sees only what is best for India, and what is worthy of a great nation. The entire structure of the Congress is founded on a solid basis which is not to be shaken by the vituperative utterances of Mr. Jinnah and men of his way of thinking.

The expression "representative organisation" is generally used vaguely and loosely. It is not necessary that each party, community or sub-community should send its representatives to the Congress. To the Congress belongs the leadership of the country not so much the representation. The Congress has been guiding the destiny of the nation for the last fifty years and more, and it will do so for many more years to come. This political awakening of the country, this tremendous upheaval of the masses of the land, this social, political and economic regeneration of the people, all are due to the ceaseless endeavour of Congress. The Congress gave lead to the country and the country has fashioned its course according to its ideals and policies. In every matter, political and economic, the Congress by right should give lead to the people. The question of representation is insignificant. Therefore what does it matter, if a particular community purposely remains outside of it? Even then the Congress has the leadership of that community. It is sufficient if the ideals and principles of the Congress are national and universal. How many Hindus, how many Moslems, are within it or how many are outside of it, that is not the point at issue here, that is not

the real thing. If all the Indians were Hindus, it would have demanded independence and if all the Indians were Moslems the Congress would still have fought for independence. The birth of the Congress is due to the unsatiable hunger for freedom. There was this desire for freedom, and therefore emerged the Congress out of difficulties, trials and tribulations. As long as this desire will predominate the mind of the nation, so long will there be the necessity of the Congress, so long will the Congress lead the country in its struggle for freedom. We admit that the Congress does not represent Islam or Hinduism, but in its broad bosom has sheltered all the best and noblest ideals that are necessary for a nation. The greatness of the Congress is independent of your likes or dislikes, or your creeds. By its very creed and principle it stands apart from other organisations of the country. You may accept it or reject it, but that does not affect its greatness or its leadership. It is great and noble, and a class by itself. A slave might like his master—he might put forward many excuses against his liberation, he might even think his emancipator his enemy, but yet the emancipator of slaves is a great and noble person. The emancipators of slaves are more truly the representatives of slaves than their benign masters to whom they hug closely when the time of liberation arrives near at hand. The causes of slaves got a better representation in these philanthropic men than in their masters. Similar is the position of the Congress in relation of the millions of the people of India, some of whom might not know their true benefactors. Whatever the Congress does, it does out of humanitarian love for the toiling masses of India. The question of Hindu-Moslem representation is foolish and meaningless.

## IS CONGRESS A HINDU ORGANISATION ?

The idea that the Indian Nation comprising of diverse communities, creeds and sects should have only one organisation

which would work and fight for the common welfare and freedom of the country was conceived some fifty years ago by some of our illustrious countrymen. The Indian National Congress is the direct outcome of their deliberate endeavour and sacrifice. From that time onward the Congress has been developing into a purely national organisation and to-day by the slow process of evolution it has become a fully national body, and has placed itself face to face before the mighty British power. Although it is desirable that while the fight for freedom will be going on, there should not exist any organisation which might be set up as a rival one to the Congress, yet due to certain inexplicable causes, there grew up certain organisations which are more in the nature of counter revolutionary organisations than communal and as such are to-day attempting to undo the good work of Congress under various pretexts. When those organisations, associations or leagues come to grapple with the realities of the situation they found that their own position would be insecure unless some device are made to lower down the name of the Congress in the estimation of the people. They could not produce a better programme of action than the Congress, they could not set up a better example of self-sacrifice than the Congress, they could not give a better and nobler ideal of service for the country than the Congress; and yet they wanted to humiliate the Congress before the people and the world. How would they do it? If they had adopted more radical principles, advocated more advanced measures and organised a band of more selfless workers and set it up against the Congress, then certainly they would have been able to turn down the Congress and win over the sympathy of the people. But they did not do that, rather they adopted a retrograde policy and began to vilify the Congress for its advanced ideas and principles. With the retrograde principles and reactionary measure how would they approach the people? It is by an appeal to the religious passion of man that they approached the masses. Due to their lack of education the Muslim masses are more easily guided by the fanatical leaders than the Hindu masses. These leaders began to rouse the religious passions of the Muslims by carrying on a false

propaganda against the Congress and its ideals and principles. The cheap and the most handy pretext is that the Congress is a Hindu organisation and as such the Muslim interest is not safe under its guidance. From platform, pulpit and the Press these false allegations were so often repeated that a large number of Muslims without caring to know the veracity of them readily believed them as true.

In order to prove that the Congress is a Hindu organisation one must have to show that its aim, ideals and principles are all for the Hindus. It does not matter how many Muslims are within it and how many are outside of it. Nor does it matter by how many Muslims or Hindus the Congress work is being carried on. If its aims and ideals are national, it is certainly a national organisation. To the sober and impartial men and women who are not guided by emotion and passion we appeal to consider the whole thing in its true perspective and then form an opinion of their own. The word "communal" is now used very vaguely and loosely. Any one with whom a person is not at one is labelled as communal. When a Hindu or a Muslim speaks something in defence of his religion he at once is called communal by the other. As if to do something for one's own community is communalism. But that is not the concept of communalism. In order to gain certain ulterior motives which are generally hidden from public eye when any person exploits the religious passion of man—he is truly a communal person and that method of subserving one thing in the name of religion is called communalism. To devote one's whole life to the cause of social service is not communalism, nor is it communalism to do welfare work for the benefit of one's own community. To label one of communalism, it must be shown that behind all his activities there is an ulterior motive for which he exploits religion. Communalism is a plaything in the hands of the fanatics and reactionaries who subserve their own interests by this foul method of exploiting religion. An organisation is called communal when it seeks to exploit religion in the above way. This sort of organisation is intended exclusively for the members of one community, it does not allow the members of other communities to enter into it. I need not

enter here into the discussion whether the Hindu Mahasabha or the Muslim League falls within the category of communal organisations. It is up to them to prove that they are not communal. But about these two organisations one thing is sure that they do not allow members of other communities to take part in their deliberations. That is, the Hindu Mahasabha is exclusively for the Hindus however broad term that might be, and the Muslim League is for the Muslims. Neither of these two organisations does ever think of uniting Indians into a composite nation. Setting the above rule as test for communal organisation, let us now see whether the Congress falls within that category. According to its rules the Congress is an organisation which is open to the members of all the communities of India. Not to speak of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist, Parsi, Jew, even an atheist and agnostic can be its active members, can take part in its deliberations and can be elected president of the Congress (such as Mrs. Beasant, Wedderborn, Naoroji). It has nothing to do with the religions of its members. It is a political organisation and its avowed aim is to win freedom of the country. All its policy and programme is for the people of the country, it embraces all, it absorbs all, but it never exploits religion for the sake of its objects. Whether Congress has been successful in its attempt and whether it acts up to its ideals that is not the point at issue here. It is sufficient if its ideals and principles are national and for all the communities. As a human institution it might have its defects and pitfalls. It is up to the people to see that it does not deviate from its ideals. If it deviates they have the right and duty to chastise it, to correct it and to purify it. Because of certain defects and pitfalls, it does not cease to be a national organisation, just as the British Parliament in spite of all its defects is a national Parliament of England. So also is our Congress a national body in spite of its defects and drawbacks.

Thus it is proved beyond doubt that the Congress is a national institution. As the Hindus in India are a majority community it is not unnatural that in any organisation which is formed on an All-India basis their number<sup>e</sup> will be over-

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whelmingly great. But that does not destroy its national character. The attitude of the Congress towards the minority communities specially towards the Muslims has been all through its eventful career marked by perfect justice and equity. It has laid great stress on the removal of their grievances as a national organisation should do. It has passed various resolutions giving guarantees of safeguards to the religion and culture of the Muslims. It took up the cause of the Khilafat in right earnest. Several Muslims of hallowed memory held the post of presidentship of the Congress with honour and distinction. It gave active sympathy to all the Muslim countries fighting for their freedom, such as Turkey, Palestine, Egypt, Rif. In spite of all these glaring facts if any one still calls it a Hindu organisation, then we must say that he is either a man of perverted brain or a man who is bent upon doing mischief. The very fact that in spite of the vile propaganda of the Muslim League, thousands of Muslims are within the Congress, they are proud of it, shows that the Congress is not a Hindu organisation. However maliciously they may accuse it, it is still a national organisation of all the people of India.

It is true that the number of the Hindus is larger than the Muslims and other minority communities. That does not make an organisation communal. An organisation is judged by its policy and principles, not by the religion of its members. If not a single Muslim is in the Congress, it will still be national as long as its ideals will be national, as long as its door will be open to all the people of India. The false canard that the Congress is a Hindu body has been raised by the Jinnahites. But Muslims there are and will always be within the fold of the Congress and they all are in their representative capacity. The jaundiced eye of the League leaders cannot find out the greatness of the Congress. But the strength of the Congress is increasing tremendously, and before a decade is past it will attract within its fold like the rod of Moses, all the serpents of the magicians that will be let out to devour it. The claim of the National Congress is based on sound footing—it is an All-India national body and it fully represents the Muslims just as it represents the

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Hindu, Sikh, Christian and other communities.

The Congress is condemned by the Mahasabha as pro-Muslim, by the Muslim League as pro-Hindu and by the British Government as revolutionary organisation. In the face of these tremendous difficulties the Congress has no other alternative but to follow the path it has chosen after mature judgment. There is risk in the path, there are chances of defeat and victory in its struggle—but let the concentrated energy of the nation be fixed on their ideal of freedom.

### MUSLIM PRESIDENTS OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

The most noteworthy feature of the Indian National Congress is its national character. It represents all the communities, races and peoples of India within its all-embracing body. A proper and adequate adjustment of all the interests of the country is the key-note of the Indian National Congress. From a small beginning and with a handful of men it gradually grew into a powerful organisation having its branches and ramifications throughout the length and breadth of the vast continent of India. If it represents the Hindus, it represents in no less a degree the Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and other minor communities of India who claim India as their motherland. The attitude of the Congress towards the various communities is of perfect mentality. It does not belong to a particular community, it belongs to the entire nation, to the entire people of India. It is an object of pride and glory not only to the Hindus, but to other communities also. From the very day when the Congress took its birth, it was conceived to be a national body by its early leaders ; and think of its glorious history of past 56 years, the Congress leaders have kept its tradition



sacred and inviolate. Not the least taint of communal bias could ever contaminate the glorious history of the Congress. To-day it is the only organisation to which the people of different religious persuasions look up to it with pride and satisfaction as an organisation of their own making.

The annual presidentship of the National Congress is a prize post, the greatest honour that is in the power of the nation to confer upon the countrymen, and not a few among them were Muslims. Among the illustrious celebrities of hallowed memory who had adorned the presidential chairs of the Congress, many were Muslims, Christians and Parsis. In this article I shall only place before the readers a few names of the Muslim presidents of the Indian National Congress who guided the destinies of the troublous times of its history. Those who charge the Congress that it is a Hindu organisation must have to admit after a perusal of the long history of the Congress that from the very earliest stage it has been serving as a common platform for the Indians representing various communities and interests. It was never intended to be a Hindu organisation, and it is not as a Hindu or sponsor of Hindu interests, that its early founders gave birth to it. It is as an Indian and Indian only that they built this mighty edifice, and discussed matters from an Indian point of view. But from the very day when the Congress was born, there grew up a class of men who foreseeing that the Congress might turn into an anti-government party, began to spread calumny against the Congress that it was a Hindu organisation. Almost all the presidents of Indian National Congress warned the people against the baseless allegations that were spread against it. By their utterances, behaviour and conduct they proved to the hilt that the Congress was a national organisation. Had it been a Hindu organisation, why so many non-Hindus were elected to the presidential chairs of the Indian National Congress? The first President Mr. W. C. Bannerjee was a great patriot, and a scholar of the rarest quality. In his presidential speech he claimed for the Congress an entirely representative character comprising within its fold all the communities and interests of India: "If community of sentiments, community

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of feelings and community of wants enabled any one to speak on behalf of others, then surely we might justly claim to be the representatives of the people of India." This was the claim of all the presidents of the Congress on its behalf. Dadabhai Naoroji the 2nd president was a Parsi by religion, but he was an Indian to the backbone and so he did not find it difficult to join the Indian National Congress as an Indian, and discuss matters from Indian point of view. Badruddin Tyabji was the 3rd president and he was a Muslim. The fourth and fifth presidents were European Christians. Europeans or Indians, Hindus or Muslims, Christians or Parsis—it mattered little to our leaders—they were concerned with the problem of the well-being of India. Anyone who thought of doing some service to India found an honourable place in the National Congress. In this article I shall only deal with the Muslim presidents of the Congress to show our brothers-in-faith that the Congress is as much of the Muslims as it is of the Hindus or other communities of India.

This point was particularly stressed upon by Badruddin Tyabji, the third president of the Congress. All these baseless charges that are brought against the Congress by the Muslim League to-day are the very charges that the reactionary Muslims of those days brought against it. These are as old as the Congress itself, and the various activities of the Congress proved to a man in the street that they were false and malicious. Let me quote a few lines from Badruddin Tyabji's presidential speech wherein he claimed that the Congress was a representative organisation of the whole of India. He spoke about the Congress thus: "It is a meeting composed not merely of the representatives of any one city or even of one province—but of the whole of the vast continent of India—representing not any one class or interest but all classes, and all interests of the almost innumerable different communities that constitute the people of India. I think we are fairly entitled to say that this is a truly representative national gathering." Then after criticising the nefarious propaganda of those Muslims who were against the National Congress, the esteemed president most emphatically declared: "I, at least not merely in my individual capacity,

but as representing the Anjuman-i-Islam of Bombay, do not consider that there be anything whatever in position or the relations of the different communities of India—be they Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsees or Christians—which should induce the leaders of any one community to stand aloof from the others in their efforts to obtain those great general reforms, those great general rights which are for the common benefit of us all and which I feel assured have only to be earnestly and unanimously pressed upon Government to be granted to us.” These noble utterances were made by a noble leader of the country fifty-three years ago and in the succeeding years the Congress had kept intact all of its highest and noblest ideals.

Mr. Rahmatullah Sayani was the second Muslim president of the Congress. It was in the 12th session of the Congress (in 1896) that he was elected to the prize post. He is regarded as one of the greatest presidents of the Congress. His Presidential speech was marked by that lucidity of expression, that boldness of spirit, that maturity of judgment and that impartiality of attitude which belong to the great statesmen of all ages. In that age of seed time he clearly foresaw that the disparagers of the National Congress would rivet on one point only to humiliate it before the Muslim public—that it would prove inimical to the Muslims. In his learned presidential speech he took up that point in right earnest and discussed about all the possible charges that might be raised against the Congress and he answered them one by one. The hackneyed and meaningless cry of “Islam in danger,” “Muslim interest” is not a new pretext in these days—fifty years ago it was the cry of the reactionary groups of the Muslim leaders. He collected from various sources seventeen possible objections that the Muslims might raise against the Congress and answered them all to the entire satisfaction of the Muslims. I shall quote from his memorable speech a few of these objections with his own answer to them. Readers will find in them that courage and foresight and patriotism in which most of our League leaders miserably lack. The first objection of the Muslims to the Congress is that “it is against their religion to join

the Congress, as by joining the Congress they will be joining the Hindus who are not Mussalmans." The answer to this objection is worth repeating even to-day. Let me quote a few lines from his speech: "All the Mussalmans in India have always lived side by side with the Hindus and mixed with them and co-operated with them both during the period of the Mussalman rule as also since then. In fact both the Mussalmans and the Hindus as also other races residing in this country, are all equally the inhabitants of one and the same country; and are thus bound to each other by ties of a common nativity. They are all sharers in the benefits and advantages as also in the ills, consequent in common residence, all are subject to common joys and common sorrows and must necessarily co-operate with each other as humanity is imperfect and dependent on co-operation. The object of the Congress is to give expression to the political demands of the subject and to pray that their political grievances may be redressed and their political disabilities may be removed; that the political burdens of the country may be lightened and its political conditions may be ameliorated: that the political status of millions of human beings who are their fellow-countrymen may be improved and their general conditions may be rendered more tolerable. It is a most meritorious work, a work of the highest charity. No nobler or more charitable work could possibly be conceived. The only question is whether there should be two separate organisations, Mussalmans and non-Mussalmans both simultaneously doing the same work, separate in name only, but identical in nature and interest, or whether there should be a joint organisation. Obviously, the latter is preferable, especially as the Congress has no concern whatever with the religion or the religious convictions of any of its members." (Extract from Sayani's speech at the 12th session of Congress held in Calcutta, 1896 and see page 35-41).

The next two objections with which he dealt is that the Congress does not adequately represent all the races of India and that the motives of the persons constituting the Congress are not honest. He gave a most convincing reply to these two objections which we often repeat even to-day in the press

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and the platform : "If the Congress does not, as is alleged, adequately represent all the races, surely the fault lies, not on the shoulders of the Congress leaders who invite all the races, but on the shoulders of those races themselves who turn a deaf ear to such invitation and prefer not to respond to it. It is the duty of such races in response to such invitation to attend the Congress and not to blame them when in fact they ought to blame themselves." Mark the following remarks : "All public bodies assembled in public meetings, desirous of giving every publicity to their proceedings and even keeping a public record of its transactions, ought to be judged by their sayings and doings. It is not right or proper to attribute to such bodies improper motives, unless such motives can be fairly and reasonably inferred from their sayings or doings or both. In fact no person, having any sense of self-respect ought to attribute improper motives unless he is prepared to prove the same, and it is to be hoped for the honour of the Mussalmans to cease from making reckless charges which they are not prepared to substantiate." (Extract from the same speech).

Another serious objection that is raised against the Congress is that "inasmuch as the Congress is a representative body and inasmuch as the Hindus formed the majority of the populations, the Congress will necessarily be swamped by the Hindus and the resolutions of the Congress will, to all intents and purposes, be the resolutions of the Hindus, and the Mussalman's voice will be drowned." The answer that Mr. Sayani, the learned president, made to this objection is placed before the Muslim public from which they will find that the leaders of the Congress from the very beginning tried to appease the suspicion of all classes of the people. "It does not", says president Sayani, "follow that, because the Hindus form the majority of the Congress that resolutions of the Congress will be the resolutions of the Hindus. It is a standing rule of the Congress, solemnly passed and recorded that if any proposal is disapproved of by the bulk of either the Hindus or the Mussalmans, the same shall not be carried. Again so long as the Congress leaders happen to be men of education and enlightenment, men of approved conduct and

wide experience, men, in fact, who have a reputation to lose, the Congress will never be allowed to run its course for the benefit of sectional, private or party purpose. Again if the Mussalmans attend the Congress meetings, surely the Congress shall be bound to hear and to give careful consideration to Mussalman views, and arguments founded on facts and reasons are bound to prevail. Assuming, however, that the Congress is reduced to a rabble meeting which is not probable, why then it will lose its position and nobody will pay any attention to its resolution. The Mussalmans, however, instead of raising puerile and imaginary objections from a distance, should attend Congress meetings and see for themselves what is going on in such meetings. Indeed they will find that even when one member puts forward cogent reasons in opposition such proposal is eventually dropped." (see p 37-41)

These two great Mussalmans were the presidents of the Indian National Congress when it was in its teens, when prayer, petition and protest were the only weapons in the hands of the leaders to redress the grievances of the people. The third Muslim President of the Congress was Nawab Syed Mahmud who belonged to the old school of thought. But after that time during the days of the Non-Co-operation movement the Congress gave up that policy and adopted a manly method of direct action as the proper weapon of achieving our goal. The days of arm-chair politicians are gone, the Congress demanded a life-long service of its votaries, especially of its president. Even in these hard days Muslims were not wanting to adorn the presidential chair of the Congress. Four names of outstanding ability stand out conspicuously as the presidents of the National Congress :—Syed Hassan Imam, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Moulana Mohammad Ali and Dr. Ansari, all of them except Maulana Azad have gone to the abode of eternal peace. The services of these four great presidents of the Congress are too well-known to need any repetition. Most of them were able president, and they were elected as presidents not because they were Mussalmans, but because they were able men with outstanding ability and influence. The door of the Congress is

open to all, it embraces all, it assimilates all in its great body. Whatever the enemies might say against it, the Congress is always a National organisation. It matters little whether those who fight for the nation, are Muslims or Hindus, or Christians,—if it continue to fight for India's freedom, it amply justifies its claim of representing the entire people of India.

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## CONGRESS ON COMMUNAL PROBLEM

The Congress movement from its very inception has been faced with the difficulty that persistent attempts have been made to keep the Muslims, as a class, away from it. Though these attempts have not fully successful, it is, nevertheless, a fact that in most of the provinces the majority of the Muslims have not joined the Congress. There was a departure in 1921 when Congress took up the Khilafat cause, so much so, that even the abolition of the Muslim League, which is the special organisation of the Indian Muslims, was once seriously proposed. But with the solution of the Khilafat question the old policy of aloofness and isolation was revived though not to the same extent as before.

In spite of this attitude on the part of the Muslims, the Congress, as the only representative body of the Indians, has to take into consideration their needs & special interests also. It becomes incumbent mainly for (1) bringing about an understanding and approachment between the Indian communities, (2) facilitating a joint national struggle for freedom and (3) framing a suitable constitution for self-Governing India to the satisfaction of all communities concerned. Resolutions of the Congress that were passed in the open sessions from 1885 to 1940, represent the progress thus far achieved towards the realisation of these objects and its attempt for the establishment of communal harmony between the Hindus and Muslims.

## THE HON. MR. BUDRUDDIN TYABJI

RAJAH SIR T. MADHAVA RAO AND GENTELMEN,—  
I thank you most sincerely for the very great honour you have done me by electing me President of this great national assembly. (Applause) Gentlemen, it is impossible not to feel proud of the great distinction you have thus conferred upon me, the greatest distinction which it is in your power to confer upon any one of your countrymen. (Loud and continued applause.) Gentlemen, I have had the honour of witnessing great public meetings both in Bombay and elsewhere, but it is quite a novel sensation for me to appear before a meeting of this description—a meeting composed not merely of the representatives of any one city or even of one province—but of the whole of the vast continent of India,—representing not any one class or interest, but all classes (hear, hear, and applause) and all interests of the almost innumerable different communities that constitute the people of India. (applause.)

Gentlemen, I had not the good fortune to be present at the proceedings of the first Congress, held in Bombay in 1885, nor had I the good fortune to take part in the deliberations of the second Congress, held in Calcutta last year. But, gentlemen, I have carefully read the proceedings of both those Congresses, and I have no hesitation in declaring that they display an amount of talent, wisdom and eloquence of which we have every reason to be proud. (Applause.)

Gentlemen, from the proceedings of the two past Congresses, I think we are fairly entitled to hope that the proceedings of this present Congress will not only be marked by those virtues, but by that moderation and by that sobriety of judgment which is the offspring of political wisdom and political experience. (Applause.)



Gentlemen, all the friends and well-wishers of India, and all those who take an interest in watching over the progress and prosperity of our people, have every reason to rejoice at the increasing success of each succeeding Congress. At the first Congress in Bombay, in 1885, we had less than 100 representatives from the different parts of India; in the second Congress, at Calcutta, in 1886, we had as many as 440 representatives, while at this Congress, I believe we have 600 delegates (applause) representing all the different parts and all the different communities of this great empire. I think, then, gentlemen, that we are fairly entitled to say that this is a truly representative national gathering. (Hear, hear and applause). Indeed, if that tentative form of representative institutions which has so often been asked for, from Government, were granted to us, I have not the smallest doubt but that many of the gentlemen, I now have the honour of addressing, would be elected by their respective constituencies to represent their interest. (Applause.)

Gentlemen, it has been urged in derogation of our character, as a representative national gathering, that one great and important community, the Mussulman community—has kept aloof from the proceedings of the two last Congresses. Now, gentlemen, in the first place, this is only partially true and applies only to one particular part of India, and has moreover, due to certain special, local, and temporary causes (hear, hear, and applause), and in the second place, no such reproach can, I think, with any show of justice be urged against this present Congress (applause) and gentlemen, I must honestly confess to you that one great motive which has induced me in the present state of my health, to undertake the grave responsibilities of presiding over your deliberations, has been an earnest desire, on my part, to prove, as far as in my power lies, that I, at least, not merely in my individual capacity, but as representing the Anjuman-Islam of Bombay (loud applause), do not consider that there is anything whatever in position or the relations of the different communities of India, be they Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsees, or Christians—which should induce the leaders of any one community to stand aloof from the others in their efforts to obtain those great general reforms, those general rights

which are for the common benefit of us all (hear, hear and applause) and which, I feel assured, have only to be earnestly and unanimously pressed upon Government to be granted to us.

Gentlemen, it is undoubtedly true that each one of our great Indian communities has its own peculiar, moral, educational and even political difficulties to surmount but so far as general political questions affecting the whole of India—such as those which alone are discussed by this Congress are concerned, I, for one, am utterly at a loss to understand why Mussulmans should not work shoulder to shoulder (hear, hear and applause) with their fellow-countrymen, of other races and creeds, for the common benefit of all. (Applause.) Gentlemen, this is the principle on which we, in the Bombay Presidency, have always asked and from the number, the character, the position, and the attainments of Mussulman delegates from the Bengal Presidency and from the Presidency of Madras as well as from the North-West Provinces and the Punjab, I have not the smallest doubt that this is also the view held, with but few, though, perhaps, important exceptions, by the leaders of the Mussulman communities throughout the whole of India. (Hear, hear and applause.)

Gentlemen, it has been urged as a slur upon our loyalty that this Congress is composed of what are called the educated natives of India. Now, if by this it is intended to be conveyed, that we are merely a crowd of people with nothing but our education to commend us, if it is intended to be conveyed that the gentry, the nobility and the aristocracy of the land have kept aloof from us, I can only meet that assertion by the most direct and the most absolute denial. (Hear, hear and applause.) To any person who made that assertion I should feel inclined to say, come with me into this Hall (applause) and look around you, (applause) and tell me where you could wish to see a better representation of the aristocracy, not only of birth and of wealth, but of intellect, education, and position than you see gathered within the walls of this Hall. (Applause.) But, gentlemen, if no such insinuation is intended to be made, I should only say, that I am happy to think that this Congress does consist of the educated natives of India. (Hear, hear).

Gentlemen, I, for one, am proud to be called not only educated, but a "native" of this country. (Applause and hear, hear.) And, gentlemen, I should like to know, where among all the millions of Her Majesty's subjects in India are to be found more truly loyal, nay, more devoted friends of the British empire than among these educated natives. (Loud and continued applause.) Gentlemen, to be a true and a sincere friend of the British Government, it is necessary that one should be in a position to appreciate the great blessings which that Government has conferred upon us, and I should like to know who is in a better position to appreciate these blessings—the ignorant peasants or the educated natives? Who, for instance, will better appreciate the advantages of good roads, railways, telegraphs and post offices, schools, colleges and universities, hospitals, good laws and impartial courts of justice?—the educated natives or the ignorant peasants of this country? (Applause.) Gentlemen, if there ever were to arise—which God forbid—any great struggle between Russia and Great Britain for supremacy in this country—who is more likely to judge better of the relative merits of the two empires? (Hear, hear.) Again I say, gentlemen, that in these matters it is the educated natives that are best qualified to judge, because it is we, who know and are best able to appreciate—for instance,—the blessings of the right of public meeting, the liberty of action and of speech, and high education which we enjoy under great Britain, whereas, probably, under Russia we should have nothing but a haughty and despotic Government whose chief glory would consist in vast military organization, aggression upon our neighbours, and great military exploits. (Applause.)

No, gentlemen, let our opponents say what they please, we, the educated natives, by the mere force of our education, must be the best appreciators of the blessings of a civilized and enlightened Government and, therefore, in our own interests, the best and staunchest supporters of the British Government in India. (Applause.) But, gentlemen, do those who thus charge us with disloyalty stop for a moment to consider the full meaning and effect of their argument,—do they realize the import and significance of the assertion

they make? Do they understand that, in charging us with disloyalty, they are, in reality, condemning and denouncing the very government which it is their intention to support. (Hear, hear, loud and continued applause). For, gentlemen when they say that the educated natives of India are disloyal, what does it mean? It means this that in the opinion of the educated natives,—that is to say, of all the men of light and leading, all those who have received a sound, liberal and enlightened education, all those who are acquainted with the history of their own country and with the nature of the present and past Governments, that in the opinion of all these—the English Government is so bad that it has deserved to forfeit the confidence and the loyalty of the thinking part of the population. (Hear, hear and applause.) Now, gentlemen, is it conceivable that a mere frightful and unjust condemnation of the British Government can be pronounced than is implied in this charge of disloyalty against the educated natives of India? Gentlemen, if this charge were brought by some bitter enemies of Great Britain, if it were brought by the Russians—for example—I could understand it (Hear, hear). But it is almost beyond my comprehension that it should come, not from enemies but from the supposed friends of the British Government, (loud laughter, and hear, hear) not from the Russians, but from Englishmen, (hear, hear) who presumably want, not to destroy, but to support their Government: I say it surpasses my comprehension. (Loud applause.) Gentlemen, just consider for a moment the effect of this reckless allegation upon the uneducated millions of the inhabitants of this country, upon the hordes of the Russians in the North, and upon the enlightened nations of Europe! I say, therefore, that the conduct of those who thus recklessly charge us with disloyalty resembles the conduct of the “foolish woodman”, who was lopping off the very branch of the tree upon which he was standing (hear, hear, loud applause and loud laughter) unconscious that the destruction of the branch meant the destruction of himself. (applause and laughter.)

Happily, however, gentlemen, this allegation is as absurd as it is unfounded. It is as unjust to us, as it is unjust to the

Government it impeaches. But, though, gentlemen, I maintain that the educated natives, as a class, are loyal to the backbone (Hear, hear). I must yet admit that some of our countrymen are not always guarded, not always cautious, in the language they employ. I must admit that some of them do sometimes afford, openings for hostile criticisms, and I must say that I have myself observed in some of the Indian newspapers and in the speeches of public speakers sentiments, and expressions, which are calculated to lead one to the conclusion that they have not fully realised the distinction between license and liberty; that they have not wholly grasped the lesson, that freedom has its responsibilities no less than its privileges. (Hear, hear.) And, therefore, gentlemen, I trust that not only during the debates of this Congress, but on all occasions we shall ever bear in mind and ever impress upon our countrymen that, if we are to enjoy the right of public discussion, the liberty of speech and liberty of the press, we must so conduct ourselves as to demonstrate by our conduct, by our moderation, by the justness of our criticisms, that we fully deserve these — the greatest blessing which an enlightened Government can confer upon its subjects. (Hear, hear and applause.)

Gentlemen, it has been sometimes urged that Europeans in this country do not fully sympathise with the just aspirations of the natives of India. In the first place, this is not universally true, because I have the good fortune to know many Europeans than whom truer or more devoted friends of India do not breathe on the face of the earth. (Hear, hear and applause.) And, in the second place, we must be prepared to make very considerable allowances for our European fellow-subjects, because their position in this country is surrounded by difficult and complicated questions not merely of a political but of a social character, which tend more or less, to keep the two communities asunder in spite of the best efforts of the leaders of European no less than of native society. Gentlemen, so long as our European friends come to this country as merely temporary residents, so long as they come here merely for the purpose, of trade, commerce or of a profession so long as they do not look upon India as a country in whose welfare they are permanently interested, so long it will be impossible

for us to expect that the majority of the Europeans should fraternize with us upon all great public questions (hear, hear,) and it has, therefore, always seemed to me that one of the greatest, the most difficult, most complicated and, at the same time, one of the most important problems to be solved is how to make our European friends look upon India as in some sense their own country, even by adoption. For, gentlemen, if we could but induce our retired merchants, engineers, doctors, solicitors, barristers, judges and civilians to make India permanently their home, (hear, hear and applause) what an amount of talent and ability, political experience and ripe judgment, we should retain in India, for the benefit of us all. (Applause). All those great questions in regard to the financial drain on India and those questions arising from jealousy of races and the rivalry for public employment would at once disappear. And when we speak of the poverty of India, because of the draining away of vast sums of money from India to England, it has always seemed to me strange, that so little thought should be bestowed upon the question of the poverty of our resources caused by the drain of so many men of public, political and intellectual eminence from our shores every year. (Applause).

Now, gentlemen, one word as to the scope of our action and deliberations. It has been urged, solemnly urged, as an objection against our proceedings that this Congress does not discuss the question of Social Reforms. But, gentlemen, this matter has already been fully dealt with by my friend, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, who presided over your deliberations last year. And I must confess that the objection seems to me strange seeing that this Congress is composed of the representatives, not of any one class or community, not of one part of India, but of all the different parts, and of all the different communities of India. Whereas any question of Social Reform must of necessity affect some particular part or some particular community of India only, and, therefore, gentlemen, it seems to me, that although, we, Mussalmans, have our own social problems to solve, just as our Hindu and Parsee friends have theirs, yet, these questions can be

best dealt with by the leaders of the particular communities to which they relate. (Applause) I, therefore, think, gentleman, that the only wise, and, indeed the only possible course we can adopt is to confine our discussions to such questions as affect the whole of India at large, and to abstain from the discussion of questions that affect a particular part or a particular community only. (Loud applause.)

Gentleman, I do not, at present at least, propose to say anything upon the various problems that will be submitted to you for your consideration. I have no doubt that the questions will be discussed in a manner and in a spirit that will reflect credit upon us all. I will only say this: be moderate in your demands, be just in your criticism, be accurate in your facts, be logical in your conclusions and you may rest assured that any propositions you may make to our rulers will be received with that benign consideration which is the characteristic of a strong and enlightened Government. (Applause) And now, gentlemen, I fear, I have already trespassed (voices of 'no, no,') too long upon your time. Before I sit down I will once more offer to you my thanks from the bottom of my heart for the very great honour you have done me, and I pray to God that I may be enabled, in some measure, at least, to deserve your approbation and justify the choice you have made and the confidence you have reposed in me. (Loud applause.) Gentlemen, I wish this Congress and all succeeding Congresses, every success and every prosperity. (Applause.)

I am very glad to see the representatives of so many different communities and parts of India gathered together this afternoon before us. This, in itself, gentlemen, is no small advantage that we, as representatives of the different parts of India, should have the opportunity of meeting and discussing together the various problems that affect us all. (Applause.) Gentleman, I will not take up much more of your time. I say, as our Chairman, Sir. T. Madhava Rao has said:—I welcome you here, but at the same time I cannot help expressing my deep regret, a regret that I know you all share, that on this occasion we

are deprived of the aid and counsel of some of those gentlemen who laboured most earnestly for and who graced with their presence the Congress on previous occasions, and who have now, all too soon for their country's sake passed from amongst us. Among the friends we have lost are—Dr. Athalye, of Bombay and Madras, who took such an energetic part in the first Congress held in Bombay in the year 1885, and Mr. Girija Bhusan Mookerjee whom all who knew, loved and respected, and who was one of the most active workers for the Congress, held in Calcutta, last year. Then, too, we have to mourn the loss of Mr. Dayaram Jethmall, the founder of the National Party in Sind, and a distinguished gentleman belonging to this Presidency, (though I fear I am not in a position to pronounce his name correctly) Mr. Singaraju Venkata Subbaroyudu of Masulipatam. But, to all these gentlemen, of whose assistance and guidance we have been deprived, we must owe a lasting debt of gratitude. They, in their lifetime, spared no pains to make the Congress, either in Bombay or Calcutta, a success, as far as in their power lay, and it only remains for us, while cherishing their memories, to emulate, their example. (Loud and continued applause.)

Gentlemen, in addition to those of you, who have been able to come to Madras, we have received numerous letters and telegrams from Associations of various kinds, and from a large number of representative men in other parts of India who for some reason or other, have been debarred from being represented at, or attending, this Congress. We have received telegrams from Hyderabad, from all kinds of places in the Madras Presidency, the names of which I shall not venture to pronounce,—from Kurrachi, Calcutta, Dehra Dun, Sambhur, Bangalore, Dacca, from His Highness the Maharaja of Durbungah, Messrs. Lal Mohun and Manomohan Ghose, Mr. Telang, and a vast number of other places and persons too numerous for me to pretend to recapitulate. There are no less than sixty odd telegrams alone placed before me. But, gentlemen, there is one among those which I am particularly anxious to bring to your notice, and that is from our old and distinguished friend



Mr. Atkins, (laughter), whom by name, at least, I have not the smallest doubt, every one of us here perfectly knows, (Applause) Gentlemen, in his telegram, he wishes this Congress and all future Congresses perfect success. (Applause.) He wishes that the unity of the different communities should be promoted and that the objects which we all have at heart should be attained. (Applause) I think you will be of opinion that is a very good omen. We want the assistance not only of representative men of the Indian communities, but also want the assistance of Europeans. (Appalause). Gentlemen, while we are attempting to learn some few lessons in the art of self-Government, our European friends have inherited that art from their forefathers after centuries of experience, and it cannot be doubted that if we can induce our European friends to co-operate with us in these various political matters, which in point of fact, affect them no less than they affect us, it cannot, I say, be doubted that it will conduce to the advantage, not only of ourselves, but of the European community also. (Loud applause.)

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## TWELFTH CONGRESS, CALCUTTA, 1896.

**Hon. Mr. R. M. Sayani.**

I beg to thank you most heartily for the great honour you have conferred upon me by electing me President of this your Twelfth Congress. It is the highest honour which my fellow-countrymen can bestow upon me. I am aware that is also an honour which carries with it a serious responsibility, as it is by no means a light task to guide the deliberations of so large, so varied and so distinguished an assembly, representing as it does all that is loyal and patriotic, enlightened and influential, progressive and disinterested, in the country. I am further conscious of the fact that the position to which you have elected me has been invariably occupied in the past

by extremely able leaders enjoying the full confidence of the people at large, and that under any circumstances, it will be beyond my power to come up to the standard of my immediate predecessor in this chair, who is so well known as one of the brightest ornaments of the country, generally and especially of the province of Bengal. Relying, however, upon merciful Providence and on your indulgence and forbearance as also on your sympathy and support, I hope I may be able to discharge the duty you have entrusted me with to your satisfaction.

Some time prior to the Christian year 1885, certain Indian gentlemen who had received their education in the English language and been trained to English methods, and who had moreover derived their ideals of political institution from English philosophers and statesmen, met together to deliberate amongst themselves on the advisability of convening a meeting of some of the most enlightened men of each province for purpose of discussing the moral and material condition of the country and taking practical step for its amelioration. A meeting was accordingly resolved upon; and as its conveners were God-fearing, law-abiding, peace-loving and peaceful subjects, distinguished for their independence, for the purity of their public lives, for the honesty of their purpose and for their political sagacity, their invitation was largely and cordially responded to. The meeting was attended by delegates deputed from each province and by some Europeans who warmly sympathised with the object. The discussion unmistakably emphasised the fact that there was a general consensus of opinion amongst the educated Indians that the existing political condition of the country was susceptible of a vast improvement. Then there was no doubt that the people had well founded grievances which required to be redressed and serious disabilities which needed removal. All were agreed that in order to achieve those objects, so conducive to the greater happiness and contentment of the people, it was advisable to adopt all legitimate and constitutional means and proceed on the methods employed by Englishmen themselves for agitation, that if agitation was carried on such principles, never mind however long, there was a fair and reasonable chance of

success, especially with the co-operation of such Europeans as were ready and willing to extend their sympathy and moral support to a movement so legitimate and national. It was accordingly decided that a Congress should be held of all educated and eminent Indians, leaders of various centres, and all admirers of the political institutions of England, with the express purpose of appealing to Government to redress grievances and remove disabilities from which the people suffered, and to secure such other reforms as the exigencies of the time and the progress of the country demanded, consistently of course with the liberal principles and the declared policy of the British Government as laid down years ago in statutes and charters, in Royal proclamations, and resolutions of Parliament. Accordingly, the necessary steps for organizing such a Congress were taken. The principal promoters of that organisation were themselves the products of English Education, while the persons invited to attend from the different Presidencies and Provinces were similarly the products of the same vivifying agency. There was also the facility of travel on account of the rapidity and cheapness of communication, the result of railways, one of the most important boons which English civilisation has conferred on our country. There was also the security to person and property assured by the Pax-Britannica. Thus the call to attend fell upon willing ears and the invitees readily complied. All the elements necessary to secure a full attendance were combined, leading to cordial co-operation in the noble work thus initiated. In short, the country was ripe for the movement, so that delegates from the principal centres eagerly flocked to give expression to the "sober second thoughts of the people." They were all responsible citizens assembled to focus the manifold political grievances of the people and give them their needed articulation. For the first time they met on a common platform to achieve a common object, to represent in the name of their countrymen the grievances under which they suffered and to give voice to their political sentiment and aspirations. They keenly felt the desire for wholesome reform and discussed with freedom and candour their political condition which they considered to be degrading. Their intellectual attainments recoiled

against what they considered to be political subservience ; their educated notions revolted against political disabilities ; and their hearts aspired to attain a higher national ideal of citizenship under the beneficent rule of the British which they fully appreciated. It was an ideal worthy to be encouraged and fostered by all right-minded and justice-loving Englishmen, and took complete hold of them. The habitual lethargy of the Indian disappeared under the potent influence of this new and lofty standard of political regeneration. Ideas of a fair share in the management of the affairs of their own country and the enjoyment of greater constitutional freedom pervaded all minds. It was not a mere sentimental cooing between loving cousins nor a mere stage-show got up for the amusement of the public at Christmas time, but a very serious organisation of combined intellectual strength, intended for the discussion of very serious matters. Surely they thought, and thought honestly, they were not mere theorists or sentimental dreamers, but intelligent, loyal, patriotic, well meaning, public-spirited men, representing the collective wisdom and ability of what was soon to become a united India. Feelings of sympathy and brotherhood pervaded the members and every one was prepared to give anxious thought and patient consideration to what each other had to advance and urge. They felt that the Congress was but the first rich harvest of what had been sown long before by wise and beneficent British statesmen in the shape of School and Colleges. They further felt that the Congress was but the visible embodiment of a new education and a new awakening such as the country had not seen for some centuries before the strong impact of Western civilisation on Eastern thought. In fact, they felt that there could be no doubt of the strength and depth of this awakening having national regeneration as its ultimate aim and object. They felt their object was rational and practical—that under the vivifying influence of the Congress, all the various peoples of the country could slowly and steadily be welded into one inseparable, indissoluble whole, to the everlasting benefit of India and the glory of England, and that those who attended them as members of the first Congress would in the fulness of time be recognised as the pioneers of the movement.

The following is a brief analysis of the declarations of the Congress leaders :—

(a) To remember that we are all children of our mother country, India, and that as such we are bound to love and respect each other and have common fellow-feeling for each other, and that each one of us should regard as his own the interests of the rest of us.

(b) That we should endeavour to promote personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the great communities of India, to develop and consolidate sentiments of national growth and unity, to weld them together into one nationality to effect a moral union amongst them, to remove the taunt that we are not a nation, but only a congeries of races and creeds which have no cohesion in them, and to bring about stronger and stronger friendly ties of common nationality.

(c) That we should endeavour specially to promote personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the earnest workers in the cause of India, to eradicate by direct friendly personal intercourse, all possible racial or provincial prejudices amongst all lovers of India, and to develop and consolidate sentiments of national unity, to effect a moral union amongst them which may stand as a solid bulwark against all external elements likely to divide or separate.

(d) That we should work together for our common elevation ; that we should work in the spirit that we are Indians and owe a duty to our country and to all our countrymen ; that we should all work with a singleness of purpose for the amelioration of our country.

(e) That in carrying out work, we should take care that no questions should be decided without full previous preparation and detailed discussion of it all over the country ; that no point should be passed unless there prevails an absolute or an almost absolute unanimity of opinion amongst the thinking and educated classes of our countrymen.

(f) That we should confine our attention to those questions only in which the entire nation has a direct participation ; that we should pass only such resolutions as are not the issue of the brain of a single individual but are the result of best thoughts of many minds during a long period ; that we should give due deference to the views and feelings of

each other amongst the whole people of our country ; that we should deal with those questions alone on which the whole of the educated and thinking portion of British India is substantially agreed.

(g) That we should conduct our proceedings with moderation and dignity so as to disarm all adverse criticism ; that every member should be afforded an opportunity of maturely and gravely considering each question in all its bearings ; that we should conduct our proceedings in such a way that whenever any resolution or decisions has been come to it should proceed from the Congress with authority and be received outside with respect ; that we should conduct our proceedings in such a way that we may acquire and maintain a character for moderation, sagacity, and practical good sense ; that we should be moderate in our language and in our demands ; that we should remember that it is only by patience, perseverance, and long effort that we can hope to succeed.

(h) That we should remember that right and truth must ever prevail in the end ; that it is not by violence or by noise that great things are achieved, nor by ambition or self-seeking ; that it is by calm, indomitable reliance on that moral force, which is the supreme reason, that a nation's life can be regenerated ; that we should avoid taking jumps into the unknown

(i) That the best interests of the Indian tax-payer lie in peace, economy and reform ; that his motto should be peace, loyalty, and progress That the first most essential requisite for his happiness is the assurance of permanent peace and the rigid maintenance of law and order.

(j) That our business is to represent to Government our reasonable grievances and our political disabilities and aspirations.

The following is a brief summary of the subjects discussed by the various Congresses held up to date :—working of Indian Administration, The Council of the Secretary of State for India, Legislative Councils, Simultaneous Examinations, Annexation of Upper Burma, Poverty of India, Public Service, Trial by Jury, Separation of Executive and Judicial Functions, Volunteering, Education, Industrial Condition of India, Arms Act, Police Administration, Abkari, State

Regulation of Vice, Permanent Settlement, Flate Duties, Salt Duty, Forest Laws, Currency, Military and Civil Expenditure, Medical Service, Compensation Allowance, Forced Labour, Cotton Duty, Financial Condition of India, Recruitment of Higher Judicial Service, Freedom of the Press, Water Cess, South Africa, Legal Practitioners' Bill, and Grievances of Railway Passengers.

The following are the places where the Congress has held its sittings :—

|           |     |         |
|-----------|-----|---------|
| Bombay    | ... | (twice) |
| Calcutta  | ... | (twice) |
| Madras    | ... | (twice) |
| Allahabad | ... | (twice) |
| Nagpur    | ... | (once)  |
| Lahore    | ... | (once)  |
| Poona     | ... | (once)  |

The following are the names of the gentlemen who have presided at Congress Meetings :—

|                            |     |         |
|----------------------------|-----|---------|
| Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee        | ... | (twice) |
| Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji       | ... | (twice) |
| Mr. Budrudin Tyabjee       | ... | (once)  |
| Mr. George Yule            | ... | (once)  |
| Sir W. Wedderburn, Bart.   | ... | (once)  |
| Mr. P. S. Mehta            | ... | (once)  |
| Mr. P. Ananda Charlu       | ... | (once)  |
| Mr. Alfred Webb            | ... | (once)  |
| Mr. Surendranath Bannerjee | ... | (once)  |

From the brief outlines of the history of the origin of the Congress herein given, of the declarations of its leaders, of the subjects it has discussed, of the places in which it has held its sittings, and of the persons who have presided over its deliberations, it is clear that the Congress was the direct outcome of the noble policy of England in introducing English education in India, and diffusing knowledge over the length and breadth of this country by means of schools and colleges and thus awakening the rising young men of our country to a sense of the duties they owed to themselves, to their neighbours, and to their countrymen generally. That although most of these young men had not travelled to Europe nor even crossed the ocean that separates their

country from the rest of the world, indeed some of them had hardly travelled in their own country, and a few of them had never left even the confines of the towns which had given them birth, all of them had by studying all that is best and ennobling in English literature and freely conversing with noble-minded Englishmen, acquired a knowledge of the events that had happened and were happening in Europe, and especially in England that thrice happy island, the home of liberty and progress. They had amongst other things learnt how the existing political institutions of England had obtained their present form; how English patriots through the ruling class might misunderstand them. They felt they had serious difficulties to contend with in the initial stage. Misrepresentation and misunderstanding are elements which every new movement has to combat with. They resolved, therefore, to be cautious and circumspect, and at every step to feel the ground before they actually put their foot thereon. They were, of course, prepared to face adverse and hostile criticism, obloquy and accusations. The English martyrs, they knew, had undergone all this, nay even suffered tortures and death. But our young men felt they had certain advantages which English martyrs had not. The Government had educated them, had in a manner sown the seeds of, and fostered their new ideas. Some Englishmen themselves sympathised with them. Under the aegis of English Rule they had toleration, and, believing in their new faith and resolved to go through all trials, all struggles, all vicissitudes, they started to put their ideas into execution.

The origin of the Congress was thus an epoch in the history of the country, and with the establishment of the Congress began a new era in the political history of India, and during the years that have followed, the movement has extended from a comparatively few persons to the whole of the educated classes and has already begun to agitate the masses, and if it is guided in the future, as it has been guided in the past, by moderation, prudence, and sagacity, is bound to have a decisive influence on the destinies of British India for the good of the country and for the glory of England. The Congress is now favoured with the presence of about two thousand members from as many hundred places, all speaking



the 'sober second thoughts' of the people and counting amongst them the foremost leaders of opinion in the country, and all the culture, the intelligence, and the public spirit—indeed, the collective wisdom of the united, educated, and thinking portion of British India. It holds its sittings in the most important cities in the empire, under the presidency of the prominent Indians of the day as well as of Englishmen of the genuine sympathy of the late Mr George Yule, Sir William Wedderburn, and Mr. Alfred Webb.

The first President of the Congress was an able representative of Bengal, Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, an able and experienced member of our legal profession (who is known to have more than once refused a High Court Judgeship) whose devotion to his country is well-known.

The second President was my fellow-citizen, Mr. Dada-bhai Naoroji, whose invaluable and disinterested services to his country for nearly half a century, not forgetting the work recently done in Parliament, are now matter of history. In fact, he may be said to be the principal maker of the political history of the country.

The third President was my honoured and distinguished co-religionist, Mr. Justice Budrudin Tyabji, an educated and cultured Mussalman of catholic views.

The fourth President was the late Mr. George Yule, a distinguished Anglo-Indian merchant, who had taken a keen interest in the welfare of this country and its people.

The fifth President was again an Anglo-Indian, a member of the Indian Civil Service, a distinguished champion of the Congress movement, Sir W. Wedderburn, Baronet, M. P., who has worked both in and out of Parliament with a devotion which has commanded the admiration of all India.

The sixth President was my valued friend, Mr. P. M. Mehta, one of the most enthusiastic and devoted adherents of the cause of India, whose record of services for the last thirty years is one of which every one of my countrymen ought to be proud.

The seventh President was Rai Bahadur P. Anandacharlu, a distinguished representative from Madras, an eminent leader in his own Presidency.

The eighth President was again Mr. W. C. Bonnerji, of

whom I have already spoken.

The ninth President was again Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the self-denying, unique patriot of India, whose advent to Lahore was the cause of those unparalleled demonstrations which are already historical.

The tenth President, Mr Webb, was a warm-hearted and reflective Irish member of Parliament in deep sympathy with our aspirations.

The eleventh President was the Hon Surendranath Bannerji, whom I have already referred to. This brief record shows the cosmopolitan character of this great movement. It also indicates how representative it has been of all the communities of this great empire, Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsis and Anglo-Indians. Their addresses prove that the Congress is not a party organisation or a political caucus, but an assembly representative of the light and leading of this vast Empire, dealing with public matters and serving public interests generally in a broad and catholic spirit, with the view not of supplanting as is often erroneously and absurdly alleged, but of supporting the Government of this country.

The only communities that remain yet unhonoured in this matter are the Eurasians, the Portuguese, and the Jews. It is not, I presume, from any lack of desire on the part of this Congress that they have not yet been honoured with the election of one of them as President, but because the communities are small, and it is difficult to find from them representative men. In the case of the Eurasians, this opportunity would have been gladly availed of had not the late Mr. D. S. White, the President of the Eurasian Association, been snatched away from us by the cruel hand of death soon after the date of the first Congress held in Bombay, at which he was present. I hope, and this assembly will, I trust, share my hope, that these communities also will have their turn in proper time.

With a record of such illustrious Presidents before me, and coming, as I had to do immediately after one of the most eloquent modern Indian orators and leading spirits of the wealthy and educated province of Bengal, I naturally felt diffident of my ability to discharge the onerous and

responsible duties devolving upon the occupant of this chair, but counting, as I have already stated, upon your indulgence, forbearance, and generosity, your sympathy and support, I consented to preside, resolved to follow the example of my esteemed friend Mr. Justice Budrudin Taybji, who has had the benefit of eight years' residence in England, is a gentleman of manifold experience, moderate and considerate views on public affairs, and who has been eminently successful, but is nevertheless an orthodox Mussulman commanding the confidence and respect of his co-religionists. The one great object-lesson which his example teaches, is, that Mussulmans, with benefit to themselves, as unthinkingly alleged, are in conflict with interests of the rest of the Indians,—can and ought to take part in this national movement.

I now proceed to point out how far in unison with the declared policy of Great Britain and British statesmen is the programme of the Indian National Congress. From the following few extracts it will be seen that the Congress is doing nothing, but nobly endeavouring to practically pursue the very policy which the statesmen whose views I give in these extracts, laid down for the better Government of India during the best part of the present century.

Sir Johan Shore, in 1787: "Whatever allowance we may make for the increased industry of the subjects of the State, owing to the enhanced demand for the produce of it (supposing the demand to be enhanced), there is reason to conclude that the benefits are more than counterbalanced by evils inseparable from the system of a remote foreign dominion."

Mr. Charles Grant, in 1792: "Whatever diversity of opinion may have prevailed respecting the past conduct of the English in the East, all parties will concur in one sentiment that we ought to study the happiness of the vast body of subjects which we have acquired there. Upon this proposition taken as a truth of the highest sincerity and importance, the following observations... are founded..... Although in theory it never can have been denied that welfare of our Asiatic subjects ought to be the object of our solicitude, yet, in practice, this acknowledged truth has been but slowly followed up.....Of late undoubtedly much

has been done, and excellently done, 'to improve the condition of our subjects in the East, yet, upon an attentive examination, it may perhaps be found, that much yet remains to be performed.' Amongst measures of improvement, Mr. Grant advocates that no force but reason should be employed; that knowledge should be communicated to the natives of India through the medium of the English language; extension of printing for dissemination of English ideas; enlightening Indians by promoting mechanical industry; improvement in agriculture by introduction of machinery.

The Act of 1813: "That is the duty of this country to promote the interest and happiness of the native inhabitants of the British Dominions in India, and such means ought to be adopted as may tend to the introduction among them of useful knowledge and of religious and moral improvement, and in furtherance of the above objects sufficient facilities ought to be afforded by law to persons desirous of going to and remaining in India for the purpose of accomplishing the benevolent designs, so as the authority of the local Governments respecting the intercourse of the Europeans, with the interior of the country be preserved, and the principles of the British Government on which the natives of India have hitherto relied for the free exercise of their religion be unavoidably maintained."

By clause 43 of this Act it was ordered that the sum of £ 10,000 should be appropriated to the education of the natives in all the three Presidencies. This was the first statutory declaration enjoining on the East India Company to spend a lakh of rupees on education. The sum, however, was not spent till 1824, which is the first year in which the state spent some money on education.

On the 2nd October, 1815, Lord Moira issued a minute declaring his solicitude for the moral and intellectual condition of the natives and his anxiety to see established and maintained some system of Public education.

In 1817 Lord Hastings announced that the Government in India did not consider it necessary to keep the natives in a state of ignorance in order to retain its own power; consequent on this announcement the Calcutta Text-

book Society and the Hindu College were immediately founded.

Elphinstone, in 1823 :—"It is difficult to imagine an undertaking in which our duty, our interest and our honour are more immediately concerned. It is now well understood that in all countries the happiness of the poor depends in a great measure on their education. It is by means of it alone that they can acquire those habits of prudence, self-reliance from which all other good qualities spring, and if ever there was a country where such habits are required, it is this. We have all often heard of the ills of early marriages and over-flowing population, of the savings of a life squandered on some one occasion of festivity, of the helplessness of the ryots which renders them a prey to money-lenders, of their indifference to good clothes or houses which has been used on some occasions as an argument against lowering the public demands on them, and finally of the vanity of the laws to protect them when no individual can be found who had spirit enough to take advantage of those enacted in their favour; there is but one remedy for all this, which is education. If there be a wish to contribute to the abolition of the horrors of self-immolation and of infanticide, and ultimately to the destruction of superstition in India, it is scarcely necessary now to prove that the only means of success lie in the diffusion of knowledge."

Sir John Malcolm in 1828 :—"One of the chief objects, I expect from diffusing education among the natives of India, is our increased power of associating them in every part of the administration. This I deem essential on grounds of economy, of improvement, and of security. I further look to the employment of the natives in such duties of trust and responsibility as the only mode in which we can promote their improvement; and I must deem the instruction we are giving them dangerous, instead of useful, unless the road is opened wide to those who receive it to every prospect of honest ambition and honourable distinction."

The Court of Directors in 1830 :—"In the meantime we wish you to be fully assured, not only of our anxiety that the Judicial offices to which natives are at present eligible should be properly filled, but of our earnest wish and hops

to see them qualified for situations of higher importance and trust. There is no point of view in which we look with greater interest at the exertions you are now making for the instruction of the natives than as being calculated to raise up a class of persons qualified, by their intelligence and morality, for high employments in the Civil administration of India. As the means of bringing about this most desirable object, we rely chiefly on their becoming, through a familiarity with European literature and science, imbued with the ideas and feelings of civilized Europe, on the general cultivation of their understandings, and specially on their instruction in the principles of morals and general jurisprudence. We wish you to consider this as our deliberate view of the scope and end to which all our endeavours with respect to the education of the natives should refer. And the active spirit of benevolence, guided by judgment which has hitherto characterized your exertions, assures us of your ready and zealous co-operation towards an end which we have so deeply at heart.

"The improvements in education however which most effectually contribute to elevate the moral and intellectual condition of a people, are those which concern the education of the higher classes, of the persons possessing leisure and important influence over the minds of their countrymen. By raising the standard of instruction among the classes you would eventually produce a much greater and more beneficial change in the ideas and feelings of the community than you can hope to produce by acting directly on the more numerous class.

"You are, moreover, acquainted with our anxious desire to have at our disposal a body of natives qualified by their habits and acquirements to take a large share and occupy higher situations in the Civil Administration of their country than has hitherto been the practice under our Indian Governments."

Lord Macaulay in 1831:—"It would be far better for us that the people of India were well-governed and independent of us than ill-governed and subject to us; that they were ruled by their own kings and wearing our broadcloth, and working with our cutlery, than that they were perform-

ing their salams to English Collectors and English Magistrates, but were too ignorant to value, or too poor to buy, English manufactures. To trade with civilized men is infinitely more profitable than to govern savages. That would indeed be a dotting wisdom which would keep a hundred millions of men from being our customers in order that might continue to be our slaves."

Mr. Charles Grant in 1833 :—Resolution moved by him in the House of Commons :—

"That it is expedient that the Government of the British possessions in India be entrusted to the said company under such condition and regulations as Parliament shall enact, for the purpose of extending the commerce of this country and of securing the good government and promoting the religious and moral improvement of the people of India."

The Act of 1833 :—"That no native of the said territories (India) nor any natural born subject of His Majesty resident therein shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them be disabled from holding any place office, or any employment under the said Government. That the policy of British Rule in India should be a policy of justice and advancement of the people. India was to be regarded as a Trust placed by God in the hands of Englishmen and they would follow the "plain path of duty."

1835 :—Free press was conceded.

Mr. Gladstone :—"It will not do for us to treat with contempt or even with indifference the rising aspirations of this great people,"

Lord Roberts :—"Our greatest strength must ever rest on the firm base of a united and a contented India."

Lord Northbrook in 1874 :—"There is one simple test which we may apply to all Indian questions ; let us never forget that it is our duty to govern India, not for our own profit and advantage, but for the benefit of the natives of India."

Lord Lytton in 1877 :—"But you the natives of India, whatever your race and whatever your creed, have a recognised claim to share largely with your English fellow subjects according to your capacity for the task, in the administration

of the country you inhabit. This claim is founded in the highest justice. It has been repeatedly affirmed by British and Indian statesmen and by the legislation of the Imperial Parliament. It is recognised by the Government of India as binding on its honour and consistent with the aims of its policy."

Lord Ripon in 1812 :—"The document (Her Majesty's Proclamation) is not a treaty, it is not a diplomatic instrument, it is a declaration of principles of Government, which, if it is obligatory at all, is obligatory in respect to all to whom it is addressed. The doctrine, therefore, to which Sir Fitz-James Stephen has given the sanction of his authority, I feel bound to repudiate to the utmost of my power. It seems to me to be inconsistent with the character of my Sovereign and with the honour of my country, and if it were free to be received and acted upon by the Government of England it would do more harm than anything else could possibly do to strike at the very root of our power and to destroy our just influence, because that power and that influence rest upon the conviction of our good faith more than upon any other foundation, aye, more than upon the valour of our soldiers and the reputation of our armies."

"My study of History has led me to the conclusion that it is not by force of her armies or by the might of her soldiery that a great empire is permanently maintained, but it is by the righteousness of her laws, by her respect for the principles of her justice."

Lord Dufferin in 1887 :—"Glad and happy should I be if during my sojourn among them (the people of India), circumstances permitted me to extend and to place upon a wider and more logical footing the political status which was so wisely given, a generation ago, by that great statesman, Lord Halifax, to such Indian gentlemen, as by their influence, by their acquirements and the confidence they inspired in their fellow countrymen, were marked out as useful adjuncts to our Legislative Councils."

The principles of policy, which may be deduced from the above extracts are—

(a) That it is the duty of England to study the interests the happiness and the welfare of the people of India.



(b) That it is not necessary to keep the people of India in a state of ignorance in order to retain the power of England over India.

(c) That the people of India should be educated. That this education should be given to them through the medium of the English language and that English ideas should be disseminated broadcast amongst them.

(d) That the people of India should be associated in the administration of the country and that every prospect of honest ambition and honourable distinction should be open to them.

(e) That all disabilities in regard to public employment should be removed.

(f) That the policy of British Rule in India should be a policy of justice, good faith and righteousness and of advancement of the people.

I now pass on to the gracious Proclamation of the Queen in 1858—a Proclamation which is rightly held to be the Magna Charta of the Indian people. It will be observed that it is to secure the fulfilment of the solemn pledges of the Proclamation that the Congress is strenuously endeavouring. It is because some of the pledges remain unfulfilled and others are violated that the Congress is obliged to appeal to our rulers. Let me now repeat some of the extracts :

“We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects ; and obligations by the blessings of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfill.”

“And it is our further wish, that, so far as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed, be truly and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity to discharge.”

This document is, as stated by Lord Ripon, a Declaration of Principles of Government. It is the Magna Charta of British India. It was not the result of agitation or even of petition. It was granted by the free will and pleasure of the Sovereign, and truly displays the generosity of the Royal nature. It was given after the suppression of the mutiny, and is a remarkable proof of the clemency of the British

Crown. It is characteristic of the Noble Lady, the Mother of her subjects, whose reign has been an epoch in the history of the world. Deep reliance on merciful Providence and true sincerity pervade the document. It is stated that this century, which is rapidly approaching its end, has been the humanitarian century par excellence and has seen the end of many injustices and of many follies, that deserved to be wiped off the face of creation. But of all the mementoes of this humanitarian century, so far as India is concerned, the Proclamation will stand the highest and will be cherished the deepest, the longest by a grateful people.

It will be observed from the above extracts, both from the opinions of the English statesmen and from the Proclamation, that the people of England, possessing, as they do, a genuine admiration for their own constitution, and jealous as they are for their own liberty, are not the people to view with disfavor the political aspirations of the people of India, aspirations forsooth, which the people of England themselves have deliberately inspired in the hearts of the people of India by purposely educating them in the English language by disseminating amongst them English ideals of political life and by encouraging them to raise themselves by education, intelligence and integrity, so as to become qualified to occupy positions of importance and trust in the service of the Government, as also to take part in the administration of the country. Under the circumstances those persons and I regret to say some such do exist amongst my community who imagine that the people of England are at heart against the people of India are certainly doing a great injustice to the people of England. It may be that such wrongheaded persons may have been led into committing the mistake by the insular rigidity of England and the stiff and stand-off attitude of some Englishmen and their rough refusal at time to budge or bend an inch. But surely such persons should not be carried away by outward appearances or by false inferences derived from such outward appearances. If such people will go a little deeper into things, their minds will soon be disabused of these pure delusions. In fact, a more honest or sturdy nation does not exist under the sun than this English nation; and there ought to be no doubt whatever as to the ultimate concession

of our demands, founded, as such demands are, on reason and justice on the one hand, as on the declared policy and the plighted word of the people of England on the other—provided always that the people of India are true to themselves. I repeat that there can be no doubt whatever as to these reasonable demands being ultimately conceded.

Sir William Wilson Hunter, in his article dealing with "the effects of a strongly constructed and vigorously enforced system of Western instruction upon an Asiatic population" says "India is now going through a quicker and more striking metamorphosis. We sometimes hear its marvellous awakening compared to the renaissance of Europe four hundred years ago. But in India the change is not only taking place on a greater scale, it also goes deeper. It derives its motive power, moreover, not from the individual impulse of isolated men of genius or of cultured peoples and princes, but from the mighty centralising force of a Government which, as an engine of human unification, has had nothing to compare with it since the days of Imperial Rome. English rule in India is however calmly carrying out processes of consolidation that never entered the brain of Roman statesman or emperor. While maintaining a policy of cold non-interference towards the rival religions, the domestic institutions, and the local usage of the Indian peoples, it is silently undermining those ancient separatist influences which made for the isolation of races. It has created new nexus for the active intellectual elements in the population,—a nexus which is beginning to be recognised as a bond between man and man and between province and province, apart from the ties of religion, of geographical propinquity, or of caste, a nexus interwoven of three strong cords, a common language, common political aims, and a sense of the power of action in common, the products of a common system of education.

"I may therefore briefly say that those political movements are the legitimate and inevitable results of Western education in India. The men who conduct them are the men to whom in all other respects, intellectual and moral, we are accustomed to point as the highest products of British rule in India. They are the men who form the natural interpreters of our rule to the masses of the people. To speak of such

men, when their activity takes a political direction as disaffected, would be equally unjust and untrue ; for they are the men who, of all our Indian fellow-subjects, realise most clearly that their interests, present and future, are identified with the permanence of British rule

"But brief as this survey has unavoidably been, it suffices to show that the present political movements among the Indian races are only one aspect of a general advance, moral, intellectual, and industrial, that is now going on. The most significant fact connected with the late Indian National Congress at Bombay was not its marvellous assemblage of 1889 representatives from every province of India. It was rather that this great gathering for political purposes was held side by side with a still greater meeting in the same city for ameliorating the condition of women in India, the Social Reform Conference, attended by 6,000 persons, chiefly Hindus. A political movement which is purely political—may be wise or unwise ; but a political movement which forms part of the general advance of a people to a higher state of society and to a nobler ideal of domestic and individual life, is irresistible. It may be guided, is may be moderated, but it must assuredly be reckoned with."

At a meeting held on the 10th May, 1866 at Aligarh, Syed Ahmed Khan, in a deliberate speech, said :—

"It is with great regret that we view the indifference and want of knowledge evinced by the people of India with regard to the British Parliament. Can you expect that body, gentlemen, to take a deep interest in your affairs if you do not lay your affairs before it ?.....There are many men now composing it, liberal in their views, just and virtuous in their dealings, who take a deep interest in all that affects the welfare of the human race. To excite this interest however it is necessary that the requirements and wishes of that portion of mankind on whose behalf they are to exert themselves, be made clearly known to them. Their interest and philanthropy once excited, you may feel assured, gentlemen, that the wants of the Jew, the Hindu, the Christian or the Mahomedan, of the black-man or of the white, will be attentively studied and duly cared for. India with that slowness to avail herself of that which would bene

her.....so characteristic of Eastern races, has hitherto looked on Parliament with a dreamy, apathetic eye, content to have her affairs, in the shape of her budget brought before it in an annual and generally inaudible speech, by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India. Is this state of things to continue, or has the time now come when the interests of this great dependency are to be properly represented in the governing body of the British nation? It has come, gentlemen, and I entreat you to interest yourselves for your country. The European section of the community in India, now grown so large, have set on foot an association in London with branch associations in India, in order to have Indian affairs and the wants and desires of all classes of her inhabitants brought prominently to the notice of Parliament.... but unless the entire native community out here co-operate with them, place funds at their disposal, and take such measures, as may conduce to place the scheme on a permanent basis, the opportunity will be lost, the natives of India will be unrepresented, and you will only have yourselves to reproach when in after years you see the European section of the community enjoying their well-earned concessions, whilst your wants remain still unmet.

"I am afraid that a feeling of fear, that the Government or the district authorities would esteem you factious and discontented, were you to inaugurate a measure like this, deters you from coming forward for your country's good. Are the Europeans thought factious and discontented? Believe me, that this moral cowardice is wrong, this apprehension unfounded and that there is not an Englishman of a liberal turn of mind in India who would regard with feelings other than those of pleasure and hope such a healthy sign of increased civilization on the part of its inhabitants. If you will only show yourselves possessed of zeal and self-reliance, you are far more likely to gain the esteem of an independent race like the English than if you remain, as you now are, apathetic and dependent. The action and laws of every Government, even the wisest that ever existed, although done or enacted from the most upright and patriotic motives, have at times proved inconsistent with the requirements of the people or opposed to real justice. The natives have at present little or

no voice in the management of the affairs of their country, and should any measure of Government prove obnoxious to them they brood over it, appearing outwardly satisfied and happy, whilst discontent is rankling in their minds. I hope, you my natives hearers, will not be angry with me for speaking the truth. You know that you are in the habit of inveighing against various acts of Government in your own homes and amongst your own families, and that you, in the course of your visits to European gentlemen, represent yourselves as quite satisfied with the justice and wisdom of these very acts. Such a state of affairs is inimical to the well-being of the country. Far better would it be for India were her people to speak out openly and honestly their opinions as to the justice or otherwise of the acts of Government." Syed Ahmed Khan then quotes from Mr. John Stuart Mill the following passage:—"The rights and interests of every or of any person are only secure from being disregarded when the person interested is himself able and habitually disposed to stand up for them. The second is that the general prosperity attains a greater height and is more widely diffused in proportion to the personal energies enlisted in promoting it." Syed Ahmed Khan then proceeds: "These principles, my friends, are as applicable to the people of India as they are to those of any other nation, and it is in your power, it now rests with you alone, to put them into practice. If you will not help yourselves, you may be quite certain no one else will. Why should you be afraid? Here am I a servant of Government, speaking out plainly to you in this public meeting. My attachment to Government was proved, as many of you know, in the eventful year of the Mutiny. It is my firm conviction—one which I have invariably expressed both in public and in private—that the greater the confidence of the people of India in the Government, the more solid the foundation upon which the present Government rests, and the more mutual friendship is cultivated between your rulers and yourselves, the greater will be the future benefit to your country. Be loyal in your hearts, place every reliance upon your rulers, speak out openly, honestly, and respectfully all your grievances, hopes and fears, and you may be quite sure that such a course of conduct will place you in the enjoyment

of all your legitimate rights, and that this is compatible, nay synonymous with true loyalty to the State will be upheld by all whose opinion is worth hearing."

It is imagined by some persons that all, or almost all the Mussulmans of India, are against the Congress movement. That is not true. Indeed, by far the largest part do not know what the Congress movement is. Education of any sort or kind is conspicuous by its absence amongst them, and their habitual apathy has kept them from understanding the movement at all. In fact they are blissfully ignorant. What the causes of such ignorance and apathy are, will be presently inquired into. It will be sufficient here to state that one infinitely small class of persons who have received liberal education through the medium of the English language, and another equally infinitely small class of persons who have received no education whatever through the medium of the English language, but who have acquired a smattering of what they are pleased to consider, education through the Hindustani language, have considered it a fashionable thing to abuse the Congress and Congressmen as such. There being thus two different classes of malcontents, if they may be so called, the grounds of their opposition, are naturally different, nay even inconsistent with each other. There is a third class, also a small at present, who have recently risen from their apathy and are honestly endeavouring to educate themselves in the right direction and are destined soon to come to the front, and, it may safely be surmised, will become as enthusiastic supporters of the Congress movement as any; but with this last-mentioned class we have no immediate concern, and this address will confine itself to the two classes first mentioned.

Before going however, through the grounds of opposition on the part of these two classes it is desirable to revert to the causes of ignorance and apathy aforesaid. An advocate of the views of the first two classes might be supposed, if he ever cared to put his views systematically, to place the case for the Mahomedans in the following way:—

Before the advent of the British in India, the Mussulmans were the rulers of the country. The Mussulmans had, therefore, all the advantages appertaining to the ruling class, The Sovereigns and the chiefs were their co-religionists,

and so were the great landlords and the great officials. The court language was their own. Every place of trust and responsibility, or carrying influence and high emolument was by birth-right theirs. The Hindu did occupy some positions, but the Hindu holders of position were but the tenants-at-will of the Mussulmans. The Mussulmans had complete access to the Sovereigns and to the chiefs. They could, and did, often eat at the same table with them. They could also, and often did, inter-marry. The Hindus stood in awe of them. Enjoyment and influence and all the good things of the world were theirs. Into the best-regulated kingdoms ; however, as into the best-regulated societies and families, misfortunes would intrude and misfortunes did intrude into this happy Mussulman rule. By a stroke of misfortune the Mussulmans had to abdicate their position and descent to the level of their Hindu fellow-countrymen. The Hindus who had before stood in awe of their Mussulman masters were thus raised a step by the fall of their masters and with their former awe dropped their courtesy also. The Mussulmans who are a very sensitive race, naturally resented the treatment and would have nothing to do either with their rulers or with their fellow-subjects. Meanwhile the noble policy of the new rulers of the country introduced English education into the country. The learning of an entirely unknown and foreign language, of course, required hard application and industry. The Hindus were accustomed to this, as even under the Mussulman rule ; they had practically to master a foreign tongue, and so easily took to the new education. But the Mussulmans had not yet become accustomed to this sort of thing, and were, moreover, not then in a mood to learn any thing that required hard work and application, especially as they had to work harder than their former subjects, the Hindus. Moreover, they resented competing with the Hindus, whom they had till recently regarded as their inferiors. The result was that so far as education was concerned, the Mussulmans who were once superior to the Hindus, now actually became their inferiors. Of course, they grumbled and groaned, but the irony of fate was inexorable. The stern realities of life were stranger than fiction. The Mussulmans were gradually ousted from their lands, their offices,



in fact every thing was lost save their honour. The Hindus from a subservient state, came into the lands, offices and other worldly advantages of their former masters. Their exultation knew no bounds and they trod upon the heels of their former masters. The Mussulmans would have nothing to do with anything in which they might have to come into contact with the Hindus. They were soon reduced to a state of utter poverty. Ignorance and apathy seized hold of them, while the fall of their former greatness rankled in their hearts. This represents the train of thought which pre-occupies the mind of many who would otherwise be well disposed towards this movement. All will admit though they might object to particular statements. On the whole, there is an element of truth which explains the Mahomedan depression.

"Almost everywhere" says Sir W. W. Hunter, "it was found that the Hindu population seized with avidity on the opportunities afforded by State education or bettering themselves in life ; while the Mahomedan community, excepting in certain localities, failed as a whole to do so. State education thus put the finishing stroke to the influence of the Mahomedans, as the former ruling race in India. That position they had inherited from the time of the Moghul Empire, and during the first period of the Company's administration they still held an undue proportion of official posts. In the last century Mussulman Collectors gathered the Company's land-tax in Bengal. Mussulman Foujdars and Ghatwals officered its police. A great Mussulman department, with its headquarters in the Nawab Nazim's palace at Murshidabad, and a new work of Mussulman officials over every district in Lower Bengal, administered the Criminal Law. Mussulman jailors kept ward over the prison population of Northern India ; Kazis or Mahomedan Doctors of law presided in the civil and domestic courts. When the Company first attempted to administer justice by means of trained English officers in its Bengal possessions, the Mahomedan Law Doctors still sat with them as their authoritative advisers of points of law. The Code of Islam remained for many purposes the law of the land, and the ministerial and subordinate officers of Government continued to be the almost hereditary property of the Mussalmans." But with the introduction of English education, "the Hindus

began to pour into every grade of official life ; and the state system of education in 1854 completed the revolution. Teaching disappeared everywhere, even in the mosques. After the Mahomedan conquest of India the mosque had become "the centres of educational activity, and were supported by imperial or local grants of land. "But the mosques now ceased teaching, even in Lower Bengal, the Province which, "a hundred years previously, was officered by a few Englishmen, a sprinkling of Hindus, and a multitude of Mahomedans" The Mussulmans lost all ground.....It became apparent that western instruction was producing not only a redistribution of employment but also an upheaval of races."

The Government of India, that is, the English gentlemen, both in England and in India, directly concerned in carrying on the administration of India, became alarmed at this state of things. The English people, generally, were grieved at the mistaken, yet noble, race of Indian Mussulmans thus going fast to ruin. Despatch after despatch was sent to India to do something for the Mussulmans. Special facilities were ordered. Some Mussulmans were after all found willing to receive liberal education, and these in their turn organized themselves into a body to educate others, and thus arose the educated class of Mussulmans. Now, the Mussulmans are noted for their gratitude. Some persons seem to have put it into their heads that Government as a body disapproved of their subjects criticising the measures of the administration. Hence that educated class, honestly, though mistakenly, opposes the Congress movement. As to the second class, interest lies in keeping the Mussulmans ignorant, so as to turn such ignorance and the consequent credulity to their own advantage.

The following appear to be the objections of the Mussulmans to the Congress :—

1. That it is against their religion to join the Congress, as by joining the Congress they will be joining the Hindus who are not Mussulmans.

2. That it is against their religion to join the Congress, as by joining the Congress they will be joining a movement opposed to Government, a thing which is opposed to their

religion, which directs obedience and loyalty to Government albeit Government may not be treating them properly.

3. That it is against their religion to learn the English language.

4. That the success of the Congress would weaken the British rule, and might eventually end in the overthrow of British power and the substitution of Hindu rule.

5. That Government is against the Congress movement ; that in addition to the duty of loyalty, the Mussulmans owe the duty of gratitude to Government for giving them a liberal education ; therefore by joining the Congress, the Mussulmans would be guilty of the sin of ingratitude towards Government.

6. That the Congress does not adequately represent all the races of India.

7. That the motives of the persons constituting the Congress are not honest.

8. That the aims and objects of the Congress are not practical.

9. That the Congress is not important enough to deal satisfactorily with the subjects it takes up.

10. That the modes of Government prevailing in the West, namely, examination, representation, and election, are not adapted to India.

11. That such modes are not adapted to Mussulmans

12. That the result of the application of Western methods to India would be to place all offices under Government in the power of the Hindus, and the Mussulmans would be completely ousted from Government employment.

13. That Government employment should be conferred not on the test of examinations, but by selection on the ground of race, position of the family, and other social and local considerations.

14. That public distinctions, such as seat on the Legislative Councils, Municipal Boards, and other Public Bodies, should be conferred not by the test of election, but by nomination based on the ground of race, and social influence and importance.

15. That inasmuch as the Congress is a representative body, and inasmuch as the Hindus formed the majority of population, the Congress will necessarily be

swamped by the Hindus, and the resolutions of the Congress will, to all intents and purposes, be drowned and therefore, if the Mussulmans join the Congress they will not only not be heard, but will be actually assisting in supporting Hindus to pass resolutions against the interests of the Mussulmans, and to give colour to such resolutions as the resolutions of Hindus and Mussulmans combined and thus aiding in passing resolutions against themselves and misleading Government into believing that the Mussulmans are in favour of such resolutions.

16. That Mussulman boys have to learn the languages appertaining to their religions, before joining schools, they are therefore at a disadvantage in the start for English education as compared with the Hindus. That the result is, that the Hindus pass the examinations, and as Government employment is given upon the test of examinations, the Mussulmans are necessarily ousted from Government employment, and it follows that the test of examination is not a fair test.

17. That as employments are given on the test of examination, the result is that Hindus get such employment, each in district where the majority of the population are Mussulmans, the Hindus form the subordinate officialdom. That the Hindus being hostile to the Mussulmans, lord it over them, and Mussulmans are naturally grieved to be lorded over by the Hindus; that in many cases those Hindus are from the lower strata of society, and in that case they tyrannise the more and thus aggravate the harsh treatment of the Mussulmans. That the result is that the Mussulmans and amongst them Mussulmans descended from royal and noble families, are mortified at being not only ruled over, but even molested by and tyrannised over, in all manner of ways by Hindus, and Hindus of the lowest orders.

I now proceed to answer these objections.

1. Mussulmans in the past—Mussulmans not in name only, but orthodox, true Mussulmans—constantly travelled in foreign lands and mixed with all the nations of the world. The Mussulmans in India are the descendants of the Mussulmans who thus travelled to and settled in India, and of the Hindus whom such Mussulmans converted to Islam. All the

Mussulmans in India have always lived side by side with the Hindus and mixed with them and even co-operated with them, both during the period of the Mussulman rule, as also since then. In fact, both the Mussulmans and the Hindus as also other races residing in this country, are all equally the inhabitants of one and the same country, and are thus bound to each other by ties of a common nativity. They are a sharers in the benefits and advantages, as also in the ills consequent on common residence; and so far as natural and climatic conditions are concerned, all the inhabitants, irrespective of all other considerations, are subjects to common joys and common sorrows and must necessarily co-operate with each other, as humanity is imperfect and dependent on co operation. Again, both the Mussulmans and the Hindus are subjects of the same sovereign and living under the protection of the same laws and are equally affected by the same administration. The object of the Congress is to give expression to the political demands of the subjects, and to pray that their political grievances may be redressed and their political disabilities may be removed; that the political burdens of the country may be lightened and its political conditions may be ameliorated; that the political status of millions of human beings who are their fellow-countrymen may be improved, and their general conditions may be rendered more tolerable. It is a most meritorious work, a work of the highest charity. No nobler or more charitable work could possibly be conceived. The only question is whether there should be two separate organisations, Mussulman and non-Mussulman, both simultaneously doing the same work, separate in name, but identical in nature and interest; or whether there should be a joint organisation. Obviously, the latter is preferable, especially as the Congress has no concern whatever with the religion or the religious convictions of any of its members.

2 It is not true that the Congress movement is a movement in opposition to Government. It is a movement for the purpose of expressing the grievances of the subjects to Government in a legal and constitutional manner, and for the purpose of asking Government to fulfil promises made by Government, of its own free will and pleasure; in fact, it is

the duty of all truly loyal subjects—subjects desirous of seeing the Government maintained in its power—to inform Government of their own wants and wishes as it is also the duty of Government to ascertain the wants and wishes of the subjects, and, indeed, those subjects who will not keep the Government well informed of their own wants and wishes cannot be called true friends of Government. We are all aware that the English nation, our common fellow-subjects, always makes it a point to inform Government of its own wants and wishes, so that Government may be able to fulfil such wants and wishes. In the case of India, moreover, promises have been made from time to time by Government to concede certain privileges ; indeed, we have the plighted word of our most Gracious Sovereign herself confirming those promises. It is our duty, therefore, to remind Government of such promises and to ask it to fulfil them.

3. Language is but the medium of expression. Orthodox and true Mussulmans have in their time learned the Greek, the Latin, and other languages. There is, therefore, nothing against learning any language. In fact, many Mussulmans of India, indeed most of them, learn and speak languages other than the language of their religion. The objection, therefore, against learning the English language, which is moreover the language of our rulers, is so absurd on the face of it, that it need not be further adverted to.

4 The object of the Congress has already been stated. The success of the Congress, as has also been stated, instead of weakening Government, will only contribute towards the greater permanence of British rule in India. The Mussulmans, therefore, need not be frightened by phantoms created by their own imagination.

5. It is the duty of all good boys, who have by the liberal policy of their fathers, been enabled to receive a liberal education, to repay the kindness of their fathers, by assisting their fathers in the management of their affairs with the aid of such education and by contributing to the maintenance and welfare of the family by all honest means in their power. Similarly, it is the duty of those subjects who have received a liberal education with the aid of Government, to repay the kindness of Government by assisting Government in the pro-

per discharge of its high functions by informing Government of the shoals and rocks lying ahead in its path and thus enabling Government to steer clear of such shoals and rocks, and not to lie by quietly with a false sense of gratitude and leaving Government to run against such shoals and rocks and thus unintentionally, of course, but nevertheless contribute to its grounding ashore. True gratitude lies in true good assistance and not in false modesty and indolence.

6. If the Congress does not, as is alleged, adequately represent all the races, surely the fault lies, not on the shoulders of the Congress leaders who invite all the races, but on the shoulders of those races themselves who turn a deaf ear to such invitation, and prefer not to respond to it. It is the duty of such races, in response to such invitation, to attend the Congress and not to blame the Congress when, in fact, they ought to blame themselves.

7. All public bodies, assembled in public meetings, desirous of giving every publicity to their proceedings and even keeping a public record of its transactions, ought to be judged by their sayings and doings. It is not right or proper to attribute to such bodies improper motives, unless such motives can be fairly and reasonably inferred from their sayings or doings or both. In fact, no person, having any sense of self-respect, ought to attribute improper motives, unless he is prepared to prove the same, and it is to be hoped, for the honour of the Mussulmans, to cease from making reckless charges which they are not prepared to substantiate.

8. As to the aims and objects of the Congress not being practical, it is a well-known fact that public attention has been drawn to the demands of the Congress, and not only the classes but even the masses have already been awakened to a sense of their political grievances and disabilities. Government has also been pleased to take into its favourable consideration the demands of the Congress, and has partially conceded the expansion of the Legislative Councils and introduced the element of election therein. Indeed, if the Congress movement is continued with the same ability, prudence and sagacity that have characterized it in the past, and especially if those who have hitherto contented themselves with simply throwing out objections begin in right earnest to take part in the movement, the movement is cer-

tain to bear fruit in the very near future and to end in practical results.

9. As to the Congress not being important enough to deal with the subjects it takes up, it will not be denied that the Congress contains in its ranks some of the most educated, most wealthy and most influential men of the day, some of whom have occupied—and occupied honourably—public offices of trust and importance, and most of whom are leaders of their respective centres. In fact, in the Congress camp one comes across legislators, municipal councillors, rich zamindars, extensive merchants, renowned lawyers, eminent doctors, experienced publicists. indeed, representatives of every industry and every profession in the land. In fact, it will be hard—nay impossible—to name any other non-official public body equally important with the Congress.

10. As to the modes of government prevailing in the West not being adapted to India, the position stands as follows: In a primary state of society whilst a particular small nation, confined to a narrow strip of territory, is governed by a single ruler, who generally belongs to that nation and is residing in that territory, as the nation is not a numerous one and the territory not a large one, the ruler is necessarily in daily and constant touch with his subjects. The affairs of the state are of a very limited nature and do not occupy much time of the ruler. Moreover, there are not special or local circumstances of sufficient importance to be taken into consideration. The affairs of the State are of a simple nature. The officers are not many and do not require special merits for their proper performance. Whenever, therefore, the ruler has to appoint to a post, the ruler himself is qualified to do so. He does not find it necessary to resort to any complicated method for the performance of this part of his duty. Hence the posts are filled without compelling the candidates to undergo the trouble of going through any definite or complicated course of instruction or examination. As the nation, however, increases in numbers, as the territory is enlarged and the needs of society become more numerous and more complicated, the number of the posts to be filled becomes greater, and the qualifications required for the



proper performance of the posts grow higher and are of diverse character. The touch of the ruler with each one of the ruled gets less and less, and the ruler cannot possibly keep himself personally abreast of a knowledge of the increased and complicated needs of his people. He becomes, in fact, less qualified to properly fill up all the posts, and he is compelled to delegate this part of his duty to others. In course of time, he discovers that it is not a very satisfactory thing to nominate to posts by means of deputies and that some definite method of selection must be substituted. The considerations which formerly guided him when he alone had personally to nominate, are of such a vague character when placed in the hands of his deputies, that he finds that it is not only not useful, but even mischievous to resort to them, as instead of such considerations being in fact given weight to, they simply open a wide door to undue influence and even bribery, and he finds it necessary to discard them and is compelled to limit himself to selection by a public examination of candidates, after they have gone through a course of instruction laid down for the purpose. Thus it happens that all other qualifications, such as of family, standing and position and others come to be dispensed with, and the test of public examinations, that is, of personal merit alone, as tested by such examinations, is substituted. It may be conceded at once that it is not a perfect or infallible test. It is a choice of evils. In order, however, to guard so far as possible against the evil of dispensing with the other considerations, a certain proportion of the posts is reserved to be filled up by the original method of nomination, and the examination test is resorted to for filling up initial posts alone, and promotion is guided by seniority and merit combined. The circumstances above set forth are not peculiar to any particular country or climate, but are equally applicable to all, and it is not correct to say that the above method is a peculiarly western method and not applicable or adapted to India. In fact, in China which is peculiarly an Eastern country the same method has been of universal application for many centuries past. Moreover, the present rulers of India happen to be foreigners, and in their case, therefore, the considerations, which have led to the method of

examination being adopted, apply with even greater force. The above considerations also apply to the method of election and representation, though not with the same force or to the same extent. Hence, election and also nomination in the case of Local Boards, Municipal Corporations, Legislative Councils, and the like. It has been suggested by the Honourable Haji Mohammad Ismail Khan, of the North-West Provinces, that the Congress should pass a resolution "recognising the absolute necessity of equality of number of Hindu and Mahomedan elected members in Legislative Councils, District Boards and Municipalities ...." and "wishing all Hindus and Mahomedans to elect" accordingly. It is a good suggestion, but so long as Mussulmans do not join the Congress movement in the same numbers and with the same enthusiasm as the Hindus do, the Congress cannot in fairness be asked to carry out such a suggestion in the manner and to the extent indicated in the suggestion.

11. As to the modes of government prevailing in the West not being adapted to Mussulmans, the observations in answer to objection No. 10 also apply to this objection. The Mussulmans may be reminded that our Holy Prophet did not name a successor. He left it to the believers to elect one for themselves. The Caliph or the successor was originally freely chosen by the free suffrages of the believers and was responsible to them for his acts. In later times this practice was altered, and the Caliphs were made hereditary; but this was done by the confidence and the consent of the believers. But even to this day, the sanction of the believers in the shape of "Baiat" is deemed necessary. "The Government of Islam," says Mr. Ahmad Riza, "is therefore in the hands of an elective monarch, limited in the exercise of his powers by prescriptive religious traditions. According to Mussulman Law, if the Caliph departs from these traditions, the body of the learned (Ulema) is armed with the right of remonstrating, and is even able to depose him. Amongst these traditions, there is one which makes it obligatory on the Caliph not to do, or even to resolve on, any act without first seeking the advice of the chiefs of the tribes, and the doctors of the law—a principle very characteristic of Representative Government. According to Mussulman Law, the Caliph is bound to be

just, to respect the liberties of the people, to love his subjects, to consider their needs, and listen to their grievances."..... "It is clear that Islam knew how to determine and regulate the rights and duties of the sovereign, even before England essayed the task." Islamism has no caste. "Let all your subjects," said Frederick the Great, "have the right to address you directly both in speech and writing." "The Mussulmans," says Mr. Ahmad Riza, "are free from clerical domination, and know nothing of rank or social grade." Said Ali, the fourth Caliph, "Superiority in knowledge is the highest title of honour." "The spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion" of the Mussulmans was remarkable; Mussulman cities were "full of savants and men of letters." "Roman Law and Greek Science continued their evolution among the Arabs." "The best of Holy wars," said our Holy Prophet, "is the righteous word spoken to a monarch who is acting tyrannically." "Islam knows no master : the Commander of the Faithful is only the chosen servant of the people." "Obedience to a Chief is limited ; it is founded on the presumption that the Chief commands in the name of the law and in the interests of him who obeys." "Obey me" said Abu Bekr (the first Caliph,) so long as I go on in good practices. If I deceive myself, warn me. If you do not, you will be responsible." The Government of Islam is a collective authority in which every free citizen, in possession of his mental faculties, is bound by a common destiny, and shares its responsibilities" "Islamism is not occupied with supra-mundane interests alone. It does not say, 'Leave to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.' It teaches its adepts that they have a civil duty to fulfil here below, and especially the duty of controlling the conduct of Cæsar." Election and Representation as also Universal Brotherhood are the characteristics of Islam and ought not to be objected to by Mussulmans. All Mussulmans are equal, and if they want any employment, they must like the rest pass public examinations. If they want any position of rank, they must endeavour to be fit for such position and resort to election, like the rest. Of course, if they can gain such position by nomination, they must thank their good fortune, but if they cannot, they have no right to grumble. They may contend, however, that so far as examinations are concerned, they are

at a disadvantage, as compared with the Hindus. If that is so, it is no doubt a misfortune. But surely they must rely on merciful Providence and put their own shoulders to the wheel and by the grace of God they are bound to succeed in their efforts; nay even more, if they have more difficulties to overcome than the Hindus, so much the more creditable will be their success to them, and so much the more will they be qualified not only for the initial posts, but for higher promotion. In fact, even in India, we find that when Mussulmans do really take to liberal education, they generally equal if not even surpass the other races, and that Mussulmans are good not only in matters requiring muscle and valour, but also mental powers and intellectual vigour, and the Mussulman community of India can produce distinguished and deeply learned scholars, such as Mr. Justice Badruddin, Mr. Justice Ameer Ali and Mr. Justice Mahmood, and here it may be remarked in passing that if Mussulmans in India have a few more leaders of educational advancement, of the calibre and energy, and persistence and devotion, of the type of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who has by his life-long services done a great deal for Mussulmans in this matter, and whose name will be remembered with gratitude and admiration for a long time to come, Mussulman education is bound to prosper. The Mussulmans may further contend that in elections they will be swamped. All that may be said here is that they are mistaken in thinking so. They have simply to try, and they will have no reason to complain. Assuming, however, that they are unsuccessful, notwithstanding their honest endeavours and notwithstanding their fitfulness, why, then Government will for its own safety, be compelled to come to their help. Objections 12, 13, 14 and 16 have already been answered.

15. It does not follow that, because the Hindus form the majority of the Congress, that the Resolutions of the Congress will be the resolutions of the Hindus. It is a standing rule of the Congress, solemnly passed and recorded that if any proposal is disapproved of by the bulk of either the Hindus or the Mussulmans, the same shall not be carried. Again the Congress is not a meeting of shareholders in a Joint-Stock Company or any other body formed for the gain of profit or for private interests, and a numerical majority does not and

cannot influence its decisions—decisions by the bye, which cannot affect anybody as they are simply expressions of opinion, and as such must necessarily depend on their intrinsic sense and reasonableness to carry any weight with Government for whose benefit they are passed. Again, so long as the Congress leaders happen to be men of education and enlightenment, men of approved conduct and wide experience, men, in fact, who have a reputation to lose, the Congress will never be allowed to run its course for the benefit of sectional, private or party purposes. Again, if the Mussulmans attend Congress meetings, surely the Congress shall be bound to hear and to give careful consideration to Mussulman views, and arguments founded on facts and reasons are bound to prevail. Assuming, however, that the Congress is reduced to a rabble meeting, which is not probable, why then it will lose its position and nobody will pay any attention to its resolutions.

The Mussulmans, however, instead of raising puerile and imaginary objections from a distance, should attend Congress meetings and see for themselves what is going on in such meetings. Indeed, they will find that even when one member puts forward cogent reasons in opposition to the proposal, such proposal is eventually dropped.

17. If the complaint in regard to the conduct referred to in the objection be correct, it may be mentioned that such conduct is not peculiar to any particular race.

Indeed, I have a presentiment, that in the very near future my co-religionists will not only join the Congress movement, but take active part in moulding it and will deem it the highest price of their Civic life to be permitted to preside at its sittings.

It is in the nature of things that persons of low origin, born and brought up in the atmosphere of low morals should on finding themselves suddenly clothed with the authority of the Sircar, get their heads turned and be led into playing the tyrant. The less the education they have received, and the smaller the emoluments their posts carry, the greater their superciliousness, the more marked their contempt for others. Cringing to superior authority and lording it over the people who have anything to do officially with them, are the dis-

tinguishing traits of these pests of society. Persons of high birth and culture, who have seen better days and better society, may sometimes be naturally inclined to give these supercilious tyrants a sound thrashing so as to make them remember it to the end of their days, and prevent them from reverting to their evil ways. But persons of high birth and culture naturally recoil from doing anything which may savour of vulgarity, and hence their silent sufferings. Government has been ever ready and willing to check high-handedness and insulting conduct on the part of their native subordinate officials. Europeans, both official and non-official, lovers of manliness and justice as they are, strongly disapprove their behaviour. But no Government, however watchful, and however anxious it may be, can possibly completely eradicate the evil, the true remedies for the removal of which are as follows. The standard of education required of candidates for subordinate official post should be gradually raised higher and higher so as to compel the candidates to have better education and better culture, in order to make them forget the evil surroundings of their previous life and to take to a better appreciation of the moral law of nature. At the same time education should be disseminated all over the land, and the standard of education of the masses should be gradually and steadily raised, so that the masses, armed with the weapon of Education, may not have meekly to submit to petty tyrannies, but may know how to protect themselves against them and to bring the offenders to a proper sense of their puniness and the impropriety of their conduct by means of union and the agitation of their grievances, and in legally provokable cases by bringing the culprits to their well-deserved punishment.

All who believe in one God and acknowledge the Holy Prophet are true believers. The fundamental principles of Islam are few and simple. Islam knows no castes and ought not to have divisions. This is certainly against the spirit of Islam. All true believers are equal. By Mussulman Law they can all eat with each other, nay more, they can eat with the followers of the Great Prophets on whom Revelation has descended. All Mussulmans can intermarry, nay more, Mussulman males can marry females from the followers of the Great

Prophets. Yet the different sects of Indian Mussulmans will not intermarry, even amongst themselves. It is the duty of all true believers to educate themselves, their wives and their sons and their daughters so as to enable them to know God aright. Yet ignorance is the prevailing rule amongst Indian Mussulmans. Mussulman females are free. Marriage is a contract in which the husband and the wife are parties. Females have independent property. Yet amongst Indian Mussulmans there are frequent cases of maltreatment of wives. The Musjids are places of worship as also places for giving education, and places of meeting for discussion of social and political matters. Yet discussion and consideration and expression of opinions is an exceptional thing amongst Indian Mussulmans. Freedom of speech and liberty of action consistent with a few fundamental and world-recognised principles are the birth-right of Mussulmans. Yet Indian Mussulmans are content to sit idle. To point out to the rulers their own grievances and to ask redress for them is the privilege of Mussulmans. Yet Indian Mussulmans prefer to remain silent. To be active and to be energetic, to be enterprising and to be fearless, has been the characteristic of the faithful. Yet Indian Mussulmans prefer to remain indolent and apathetic. Are not Indian Mussulmans, then, to blame themselves? If the Indian Mussulmans once shake off their lethargy and rid themselves of their apathy, if they unite together and love each other, as members of the same fold, as brothers of a Universal Brotherhood, mix with each other and intermarry, educate themselves, and their wives and children, and meet together and exchange opinion and voice their grievances, and generally endeavour to raise themselves and actively co-operate in the raising of their brethren, they have under merciful Providence as bright a future before them as they had a glorious past. The Indian Mussulmans are a brave and generous race, and it is natural that they should smart under the misfortunes that have overtaken them and resent the treatment that has been and is extended to them. But certainly apathy and lethargy are not the means calculated to reinstate them in anything like their former greatness. Relying, therefore, upon merciful Providence and True Religion, therefore upon merciful Providence and True Religion, and

placing confidence in Almighty God, the Creator of the Universe and the Dispenser of all things, they must rise equal to their present trials, and it is to be fervently hoped that the Benign Ruler may have mercy upon them and raise them again to prosperity and good fortune. One of the obvious means by which Indian Mussulmans can raise themselves is education. It is stated that there are five crores of Mussulmans in India. It is further stated that the average annual income per head of population in India is rupees twenty-seven. If so, the average annual income of Indian Mussulmans ought to be rupees one hundred and thirty-five crores. The Zakat or tax on this income at the rate of two and a half per cent., comes to nearly rupees three crores. Making all possible allowances for those who may be exempted from payment of Zakat, and for that purpose reducing it to one-tenth, we can have the splendid annual sum of rupees thirty lakhs, that is, at the rate of one anna per annum per head of Mussulmans in India, which is certainly not a very heavy average annual payment. If all the Indian Mussulmans join together and voluntarily contribute as above suggested, they will thereby be fulfilling one of the main commandments of Islam, and thus performing an act of duty. With this magnificent sum, schools for primary, secondary and higher education can be established and maintained, and in such schools educations as also food and clothing to students may be given, and there will, thus, every year, be maintained, lodged and educated thousands and thousands of Indian Mussulman youth. Government will have under the grant-in-aid rules, to contribute to this sum, and thus the total sum will be materially increased. If this system is established and continued, in the course of a few years, education will have permeated all ranks of Indian Mussulmans, and the condition of the whole body will have become so much improved as to be a matter for admiration. What is wanted is voluntary performance on the part of all Indian Muasulmans of a strictly religious duty and on the part of the leaders co-operation and good management, and is to be devoutly wished that Mussulmans in every part of India, instead of scouting the idea will allow good sense for once to overcome apathy and lethargy and give this suggestion a sympathetic consideration.



It may be observed here in passing that it is sometimes contended in disparagement of the Indian Mussulmans that "Islam is unfit to be a moral code for a nation to live in," that "the faith of Islam is incompatible with good Government and with the happiness of a people." Both the above accusations are absolutely false. In fact, the tenets of Islam are inherently capable of good government, and good and happy subjects. The very first and most fundamental doctrine of Islam that there is no god but God, that is but one God, is not only the true doctrine, but also binds the true believer to be a respectable man, and, if Mussulmans have become degenerated, it is not on account, but in spite of, Islam. Another fundamental doctrine is that of prayers. Prayers bring the human being in personal contact with his Creator. Another fundamental doctrine is that of observing fast which teaches men by personal experience to think of the miseries of their fellow human beings. Another fundamental doctrine is that of charity, and which has been admitted all over the earth and in all times to be an excellent virtue. Another fundamental doctrine is that of Haj, which apart from its religious benefit, has all the benefits of travel. There is nothing, therefore, in Islam to cause degeneracy, on the other hand, there is everything in Islam to make Mussulmans loyal subjects and good citizens.

If you will look at the map of India, you will find that India has the appearance of a one-legged horse. India has from time to time been a prey to foreign invasions from without and to internecine wars within. Famine periodically visits the land, and so does plague. English rule has, however, stopped foreign invasion, and the Pax-Britannica has put an end to internecine wars. Western arts and Western methods are employed to prevent...at all events to check...famine and plague, to keep them within gradually diminishing limits, and under steadily increasing control it is to be hoped that these monster evils will, in the near future, be completely laid at rest. The resources of the country are being gradually developed and its trade is increasing. Public expenditure, however, under British rule, is increasing by leaps and bounds far beyond the national income that is at present realized, or that can reasonably be expected to be

realized in the near future. The average income per year per head of population is, in England, £33 (thirty-three pounds sterling); in France, £23 (twenty-three pounds sterling); in Russia, over £9 (nine pounds sterling) in Turkey in Europe, (£4 four pounds sterling); whilst in India, it is nearly Rs. 27 (twenty-seven rupees,) or at 1s-4d per Rupee £1-14-6 (one pound sterling fourteen shillings and 6 pence). Thus the average income per year per head of population of India is about one nineteenth of the average income per year per head of population in England; or in other words so far as the annual income is concerned nineteen times better off than India or India is nineteen times worse off than England. Again, the population of India is mostly agricultural. The ratio of town population to country population in India is one to twelve, that is, the agricultural population of India is twelve-thirteenth of the total population of the country. In England the ratio of town population to country population is two to one, that is, the agricultural population in England is only one-third of the total population of the country. Thus town population, as compared to country population, is in England 24 to 12, whilst in India, it is 1-12; or, in other words, so far as the ratio of proportion of town population to country population is concerned, England is 24 (twenty-four) times better off than India. Again the population of British India, is, in round numbers, 22 (twenty-two) crores whilst the total Imperial taxation, in round numbers, is Rs. 95 (rupees ninety-five) crores, or, in round numbers, Rs. 4-8 (rupees four and annas eight) per head of population; and as the average annual income per head is Rs. 27 (rupees twenty-seven), the percentage of taxation to annual income is  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to 27, that is, sixteen-and-a-half per cent. The population of the United Kingdom is, in round numbers about four crores, whilst the total Imperial taxation is a little more than that of India and comes to about Rs. 25 (rupees twenty-five) per head; and as the average annual income per head is £33, the percentage of taxation to income comes to about six per cent. Thus, so far as the percentage of taxation to income is concerned, India is two-and-a half times worse off than England. More-

over, it is a well-known fact that the same percentage of tax to income, when levied on persons having good incomes, may be easily borne by them and may not be at all felt by them; when levied on persons having poor or small incomes may be heavily felt—may even become wholly unbearable. In fact, this incidence is now well admitted in the case of income-tax, and it is for this reason that on levying that tax, incomes under a certain amount are wholly exempted, and on incomes above that amount and up to a certain amount, there is a sliding scale put into operation. Thus the ratio of  $16\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of taxation to income in the case of India, though nominally only two-and-a-half times higher than the ratio in the case of England, is in incidence, considerably more heavy, and India is therefore, in reality, considerably worse off than that ratio indicates. Again, in the year 1846-50, the population of British India was about fifteen crores, whilst the expenditure was about twenty-seven crores. In the year 1894-95 the population was about twenty-two crores, whilst the expenditure was about ninety-five crores. The increase, in population, therefore, was about fifty per cent., whilst the increase, in taxation was about three hundred and fifty per cent, that is, the growth of expenditure was about seven times the growth of population. During the same period, the charges of collection rose from 6.06 to 9.75 that is, more than fifty per cent.; the expenditure on civil administration rose from 6 to 14.83, that is, more than 220 per cent. and the expenditure on Army rose from 11.39, to 24.31, that is, more than 213 per cent. Again, the estimated debt of British India for the year 1895 is £127 (one hundred and twenty seven million pounds) whilst that of Great Britain is £760 (six hundred and sixty million pounds) Thus the India debt is about one-fifth of the British debt, whilst the capacity of India for repayment of debt, as judged by the average annual income per head of population, is only one-nineteenth. Again, the debt of Great Britain in the year 1875 was £780 (seven hundred and eighty million pounds); of India £130 (one hundred and thirty million pounds). Thus, from the year 1875 to the year 1895, the British debt is reduced by £120 (one hundred and twenty million pounds); whilst that of

India, only by 3 (three million pounds). Again the rate of interest on public loan in England, in the year 1875, was  $3\frac{1}{4}$  (three and one-fourth) per cent.; in India, 4 (four per cent.) and there is still a corresponding difference in favour of England and against India. Again, Great Britain annually pays, by way of interest 12s.9d. (twelve shillings and nine pence) per head; and, as the average annual income per head is £33 in England, the proportion of interest to income is nearly two per cent, India annually pays, by way of interest annas three and pies nine per head; and as the average annual income per head is Rs. 27 in India, the population of interest to income is nearly 1 per cent. Thus a British subject, who, so far as his average income is concerned, is nineteen times better off than a British Indian subject has to pay, by way of interest of national debt, only two per cent, out of his average income, whilst an Indian subject, who so far as his average income is concerned, is nineteen times worse off than a British subject, has to pay one per cent, that is, in this respect also, is nine times worse off than British subject. Again the Imperial expenditure of the United Kingdom has risen from 81 (Eighty one million pounds) in the year 1881 to 94 (ninety four millions) in the year 1895. The addition is caused, for the most part, by an increase of the naval and military from 25 (Twenty five) to 38 (Thirty eight millions) an exceptional and temporary measure. The charges of the national debt have decreased from 28 (twenty eight) to 25 (twenty five millions), and the debt itself from 770 (seven hundred and seventy millions) to 660 (six hundred and sixty millions). The Imperial expenditure of India has risen from 71 (seventy one) crores in the year 1881 to  $94\frac{1}{2}$  (ninety four and a half crores) in the year 1894, The charges on the national debt have, contrary to what has happened in England, instead of decreasing, risen from 485 (four crores and eighty five lacs of rupees) in the year 1881 to 512 (five crores and twelve lacs) in the year 1894 and the debt itself has increased from the year 1884 to the year 1894 as follows, that is, permanent debt in India from 93 (ninety three crores) and odd to Rs. 104 (one hundred and four crores and odd) and permanent debt in England from 69,271,088 (sixty-nine millions and odd) to Rs.

114,005,826 (one hundred fourteen millions and odd). Again the total land according to the survey of India is 539,848,840 (five hundred and thirty nine and odd). Of this land actually cropped is 196,600,688, current follows, thirty millions and odd; available for cultivation, 99 (ninety nine millions and odd) not available for cultivation, 113 (one hundred and thirteen millions and odd), Forests, (62 sixty two millions). The average incident of Government Revenue per cultivated area is one rupee three annas and two and two fifths pies. The population of British India is 22 (twenty two crores). The average acreage under food crop is 18.60 (eighteen crores and odd). The average of food crops per acre both irrigated and unirrigated is 0.31 ton or 694 (six hundred and ninety four pounds). The total of food crop is 576 (five crores seventy six lacs tons). The average consumption of food-grains per head of the population per annum is 585 lbs. (five hundred and eighty five pounds) or per day 1.60 lbs. (one pound and six-tenths pounds). The total consumption is 577 (five crores and seventy seven lacs tons). It is clear, from the above facts and figures, that India is a very poor country with but few manufactures, that India are a poor nation, living from hand to mouth—indeed, some of them actually starving and many of them having barely one meal a day; that taxation is very heavy; that charges for collection and the cost of administration, both civil and military, have increased far beyond the capacity of meeting them; that, notwithstanding the heavy taxation, the national debt—specially the gold debt and the charges to meet such debt are steadily increasing.

That the Indians are a poor people, that they are overtaxed, that the Civil and Military expenditure of India is excessive, that the drain from India is of a ruinous character, that both justice and self-interest demand of our rulers that native labour should be more and more substituted for foreign labour and that all unproductive expenditure should be stopped, the following from extracts from the speeches and writings of English Statesmen themselves, make abundantly clear.

Mr. Bright in the House of Commons, 14th June. 1858 :—

"The cultivators of the soil, the great body of the population of India are in a condition of great impoverishment of great dejection and of great suffering."

Lord Lawrence in 1864 :—

"The mass of the people enjoy only a scanty subsistence."

Lord Lawrence, before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1873 :—

"The mass of the people of India are so miserably poor that they have barely the means of subsistence."

Major Baring, Finance Minister of India, in his budget speech 1882, after stating that the average income per annum per head of population in India is Rs. 27, says "It is sufficiently accurate to justify the condition that the tax paying community is exceedingly poor."

Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons, 10th May 1870 said that "India was too much burdened"

Mr. Bright, in his speech at the Manchester Town Hall, 11th December 1877 :—

"I say that a Government...which has levied taxes till it can levy no more...and which has borrowed more than all that it can levy..."

Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons, 30th June 1893 :—

"The expenditure of India and specially the Military Expenditure is alarming."

Lord Salisbury "India must be bled."

Lord Salisbury, Secretary of State for India, Minute 29th April 1875 :—"where (in India) so much of the revenue is exported without a direct equivalent."

Mr. Bright in the House of Commons 24th June 1858 :—"We must in future have India governed, not for a handful of Englishmen..."

Sir George Wingate in "A few words on our Financial Relation with India" 1859 :—

"They (the taxes not spent in India) constitute...an absolute loss and extinction of the whole amount withdrawn from the taxed country."

Mr. Fawcett, in the House of Commons, 5th May 1868 :—

"Lord Metcalfe had well said that the bane of our system was that the advantages were reaped by one class and the work was done by another."

The Duke of Argyll, in the House of Lords, 11th March 1869 :—

"I must say that we have not fulfilled our duty or the promises and engagements which we have made."

Sir George Wingate in "A Few Words on our Financial Relations with India 1859 :—

"Such is the nature of the tribute we have so long exacted from India...."

From this explanation some faint conception may be formed of the cruel, crushing effect of the tribute upon India. "The Indian tribute whether weighed in the scales of justice or viewed in the light of our own interest, will be found to be at variance with humanity, with common sense...."

Lord Harington, Secretary of State for India, in the House of Commons 13rd August 1883 :—

"The Government of India cannot afford to spend more than they do on the administration of the country and if the country is to be better governed, that can only be done by the employment of the best and most intelligent of the natives in the service."

"Lord Randolph Churchill, Secretary of State for India in a letter in the Treasury 1886 :—

"The position of India in relation to taxation and the sources of public revenue is very peculiar...from the character of the Government which is in the hands of foreigners who hold all the principal administrative offices and form so large a part of the Army. The impatience of the new taxation which will have to be borne wholly as a consequence of the foreign rule imposed on the country, and virtually to meet additions in charge arising outside of the country would constitute a political danger the real magnitude of which it is to be feared is not all appreciated by persons who have no knowledge of or concern in the Government of India, but which those responsible for that Government have long regarded as of the most serious order."

The table recently prepared by Mr. W. Martin Wood, formerly Editor of the "Times of India" whose knowledge of

Indian finance and economics is surpassed by few, and who in his retirement still takes a deep and abiding interest in Indian affairs gives the financial condition of the country at a glance so well that I will reproduce it here for your information.

Again in the words of another Englishman, money is leaving the country without commercial "equivalent" to the tune of £25000000 (twenty-five millions pounds) yearly or if you take the present fall of the rupee into consideration then to the tune of forty millions pounds yearly. In short, it is as clear as possible that the ability of the country to bear any fresh taxation is exhausted, and any further burden on the tax-payers would simply break their back—a dangerous consequence to be avoided at all hazard. Yet it is stated that the Indian should remain silent, forsooth because it will be an act of disloyalty to discuss aye even to discuss in a loyal and constitutional manner with the best of motives, honourable in themselves and calculated to ensure the safety of the country and the maintenance of the British rule in India, moderate measures of reform. It is true that English rule in India has done much for India, but much more yet remain to be done and it is a matter of extreme surprise as well as of deep regret that the sort of supercilious objection above referred to comes from people who to say the least of it ought to know better. With the above facts and figures, and it is certainly not an overdrawn picture glaring in their faces, all true lovers of their country, and all its inhabitants, and all its rulers possessing the most ordinary common sense, if they have even a spark of humanity left in them, ought to bestir themselves and leaving aside all differences arising from difference of race or creed and forgetting even just resentment, if there is any, join with their fellow countrymen in the movement—sober and temperate—as it is expressly organised for the amelioration of the country, of their countrymen themselves included. The objectionists should remember that even the most honest and the best regulated administration has constant need of proper criticism even at the best of time. For all Governments are, in their nature, monopolists, and as such have constantly to be watched and warned. In India, moreover, on account of its foreign character it is



excessively bureaucratic more than other Governments in the world are, and hence the greater necessity for constant watchful criticism on the part of the people. The Government of India moreover consisting as it does of capable and well meaning gentlemen, is from the nature of its position and constitution, between two conflicting interests, the interests of England and the interests of India and it is the sacred duty of all loyall Indian subjects to strengthen the hands of Government of India in its laudable efforts to obtain financial justice for India by moral support of the United Indian Nation and judged from the point of view keeping aloof from the Congress movement is not only undesirable but may even merit censure.

If the short sketch above given of the financial result of the British administration in India for the country only be correct we are necessarily forced to ask "if there be the result in the green leaf what will they do in the dry wood." And yet Indian Mussulmans still hold aloof alike from western education and from those political movements among our countrymen to which western education has given rise and when appealed to they talk of difficulties in their way and ask for special encouragement, and special facilities and special privileges "Special encouragement to any class," said the Education Commission, "is in itself an evil, and it will be a sore reproach to the Mussulmans if the pride they have shown in other matters does not stir them, up to a course of honourable activity: to a determination that whatever their backwardness in the past they will not suffer themselves to be outstripped in the future: to a conviction that self-help and self-sacrifice are at once nobler principles of conduct and sure paths to worldly success than sectarian reserve or the hope of exceptional indulgence."

Indeed it will be a happy day for India when the disproportion between the Mahomedans who ought to be at school, and those who are actually at school, is reduced to the lowest possible minimum, and the Indian Mussulmans, as a body, make it a point to educate their children and actively co-operate in all the public movements in the country generally and specially, "our good Congress, the germ of future federated parliament...with hearts honest, true and unselfish" ...and participate in our great bloodless battle for justice and

freedom and specially make a beginning now when "all minor sources of anxiety are overshadowed by the cloud now impending over our beloved land in which we too plainly discern the gloomy spectre of famine frowning down upon... a teeming, frugal and ceaselessly industrious population" and join in asking a redress at the hands of Government and in expressing disapproval of the mistaken system, whereby the entire resources of 220 millions of people are placed at the disposal of able and well-meaning men who are nevertheless foreigners, who can not in the nature of things sufficiently and adequately appreciate the wants, the necessities, the real condition of the people over whom they rule, and are naturally though unconsciously drifting to the conclusion that India is to be ruled for the glory of Great Britain and not for the good of her own people. That this system is a mistaken one and that a strong financial check is necessary is now admitted by eminent Englishmen themselves. Lord Welby, President of the Royal Commission now sitting, says: "Sir David Barbour made a criticism, which I think all officers connected with Financial departments must allow as a criticism, of general application, namely, that sufficient attention is not given by the departments in India to the financial question. They hardly appreciate the gravity of it, and do not forecast what the financial effect of the measures on which they are bent may be. That, of course, is a defect common to all Governments. The heads of different departments very seldom take a general view of the effect of their administration. They are anxious to carry out measures which they think are important." Sir David Barbour says, "I certainly think something is very desirable, that which would ensure greater attention being paid to financial consideration in connection with the Government of India...I think it would be better for India, better all round, if more attention were given to the financial question and if we went more slowly in periods of great apparent financial prosperity."...Sir Auckland Colvin agrees with Sir David Barbour in this opinion. Lord Welby further says: "The point of Sir David Barbour's criticism, I think, might be put thus: that in a country like India where deficits are more dangerous than they would be here, where new taxation is more difficult than it would be

here, the Government as a whole does not give sufficient attention to what may be the financial results of measures which it adopts."...Whereupon Sir Auckland Colvin remarks: "I agree entirely to that, that in a country where the taxpayer is an alien, and is not able to make his voice directly heard, the need of giving close attention to economy in administration is greater than it would otherwise be." From these remarks coming as they do from such high authorities this Congress will perfectly justified in coming to the conclusion that "the discussion upon the Budget, both in India and Parliament, needs to be converted from a force into a reality," and that all thinking and reasonable men will be justified in expecting all the races inhabiting British India to join the Congress and co-operate with it in the cause of their country and of themselves. Indeed, I have a presentiment, that in the very near future my co-religionists will not only join the Congress movement, but take active part in moulding it and will deem it the highest price of their Civic life to be permitted to preside at its sitting.

I now come to the most absorbing topic of the hour. After a lapse of twenty years, famine has again overtaken a greater part of the country. The insufficiency of rain-fall in Behar, in the North-West provinces, in the Punjab, in parts of Central India, in many districts of Bombay and Madras and in Mysore, has already led to distress among those classes who habitually live from hand to mouth. The cultivators, whose impoverished condition is well-known, are the greatest sufferers. Next come the class of small artisans and weavers, and then the day-labourers who barely eke out an anna per day as wages. The prices of food-grains in every one of the afflicted tracts went up high, in some cases 50 and 100 per cent. This occurrence was most unusual. It has seldom happened that at the very beginning of the season of scarcity, prices of wheat, rice, bajri, and jowari have gone up so high as has been the case at present. That such a condition of affairs should have created panic and led even to looting and rioting as in Sholapur, in Nagpur, and elsewhere is not unintelligible. The people seem to have been frightened at the insufficiency of food-grain. They naturally thought that if a limited stock of grain, at the very

commencement of the scarcity, should raise prices so high, what might happen when the season advances and the stocks are exhausted? No doubt, the first impulse was to curse the Bania grain-dealer and lay on his head all their woes. But as the panic subsided, and as it became known that Government would spare no efforts to relieve the distressed, while the long arm of charity may be expected to loyally assist the efforts of the State, prices went down a little. This may be taken as the situation at present. The weekly official reports show that upwards of two lakhs of the persons in various parts of the country are already employed on relief work, and that as week after week advances the number will swell till at last it may reach a maximum in April and May, the number of which it is impossible to forecast at present. Every presidential and provincial Government has been straining its nerve to do its level best to cope with the distress which really bespeaks well of the humanity of our Government. British civilisation could not tolerate famine. And the head of the State has already declared from his place in the Council Chamber that his Government will endeavour to save life at all cost and all hazard. Let us all devoutly hope that it may be so able to achieve its noble intention without indulging in hope or prospect not founded on the realities or circumstances prevailing in the country. To entertain sanguine prospects which may not only be not realised but which may end in heavy mortality, otherwise preventible, would be grievous. For when we recall to mind the disastrous mortality which took place in 1877-78, when, according to official accounts, over 50 lakhs of human beings perished, we can not but contemplate with the gravest apprehension what may befall unhappy India at this dismal juncture, should the efforts and energy of the State, with all the ample resources and most perfect organisation at its command, be found to be not so satisfactory as the people have been led to expect. I do not mean to say that these efforts and energies will be wanting. But it is not unlikely that, here and there, owing to more sanguine estimates of food and fodder and other optimistic views, the same care and attention may not be paid. You may have on paper the most perfect Famine Code; but, unless those entrusted

with its works, from the highest to the lowest, do not fall short in carrying out its provisions by a variety of causes, it is not unlikely that mortality, otherwise preventible, may ensure. It is, therefore, the duty of every citizen and public body to heartily second the efforts of our benign rulers in saving life. The Press, too, is doing an invaluable service in placing before the public from day to day all intelligence regarding the famished in various parts of the country. It is discharging a noble duty worthy of its sacred functions, and we can not but express our gratitude to it for its enterprise, which enables it to give such wide publicity to all intelligence in connexion with the famine. Its argus eyes can detect neglect, indifference or mismanagement anywhere, and enable the authorities concerned to set matters right at once. The primary and essential function is to see that relief is given in time, that it is not allowed to be too late when it may become impossible to save lives.

That the Government, as the Hon'ble Mr. Woodburn observed the other day, is in a better position to-day to cope, and cope effectively, with famine, than it was 20 years ago, is no doubt perfectly true. We have had two crores of irrigation works and seven crores of protective railways constructed since 1880 out of the Famine Fund. Facilities of communication have been vastly increased; many a tract of the country has been brought within the radius of our railways both trunk and branch. All these are assuring elements in connection with the present famine which were wanting in 1877-78. But, while admitting these facts, we should not forget that despite branch or feeder railways, despite increased communications, despite other facilities of transit, if there be no sufficient food-stock in the country to move from the locality where it may be a surplusage to one where it may be most wanted, then these appliances and resources are unhappily of no avail.

Thus the most pressing question of the hour is not irrigation or railways, but the stock of food in the country. For your own province, I was rejoiced to see the other day from the note issued by your public-spirited and energetic Lieutenant-Governor that though there was an insufficiency of rice, the surplus of the Burma crops, plus importations from

Singapur and Saigon, might be able to supply it. The Upper Provinces, under the able administration of the equally energetic Sir Antony Macdonnell, are a wheat consuming country. Though wheat has been less exported from those provinces last year for purposes of exports, it is not impossible that there may yet be a deficiency and if that is so, wheat may be imported from Persia, and Russia and even America though at a dear rate. Thus the wants of that populous, but very poor, province might be fairly supplied. It is needless for me to inform you that the N. W. Provinces and Oudh have a population numbering  $4\frac{1}{2}$  crores. But it is so poor on the whole that according to the weekly reports the largest number of persons gratuitously relieved are to be found in that province, and it also has the largest number of persons employed on relief works. But as regards the food-supply of the Central Provinces, Bombay, and Madras, I have not yet noticed full and detailed official estimates being placed before the public and if that is so, I hope it will soon be done, for you will agree that an approximate knowledge of the stock vastly helps private enterprise and private charity between them to import grain and pour it into those localities where it is most needed.

But, this question of the stock of grain shows clearly that India lives from hand to mouth. A leading weekly journal in Bombay, the "Champion," gave statistics a few weeks ago, based on the figures of the outturn of food per acre as given by the Famine Commissioners, showing that with a population of 22 crores in British India, the total quantity of food required, at the rate of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. per day per head, was 5,80 crores of tons, while the actual outturn of food-crops could not be estimated at more than 5.76 crore tons taking 18,60 crore acres as the whole area cultivated for these, and computing the outturn at 3.1 ton or 694 lbs. per acre. These statistics would lead us to infer that the outturn of food just sufficed for the population. But there is an average export of 25 lakhs of tons beyond the sea. If these exports were taken into account, the quantity actually retained for home consumption would be *protanto* diminished, that is to say, while the food required was 5.80 crore tons, the quantity available was only 5.51. This would signify a

deficiency of 29 lakhs of tons which would mean insufficiency of grain for a crore of the population. If these statistics are wholly or even approximately correct and we have no reason for thinking they are not as they are founded on official figures, you may imagine, how perilous is the situation. The late Sir James Caird observed that India had no food-stock surplus to last even for ten days. Since he made that statement, which has never been contradicted, population has vastly increased, while the area annually cultivated for food-crops is barely enough. A further comparison shows that the area sown for non-food crops is relatively larger, as may be seen from the following table.

|                      | In crores of acres. |          | Percentage of<br>increase. |
|----------------------|---------------------|----------|----------------------------|
|                      | 1880-81.            | 1894-95. |                            |
| Total food crops     | 16.62               | 18.62    | 12                         |
| Total non-food crops | 2 15                | 3.90     | 81                         |

Thus, while the acreage of food-crops has only increased 12 per cent., in fifteen years, the acreage of non-food crops has increased 81 per cent, or almost doubled. Though it is a matter of satisfaction to know that the area for merchantable crops has increased almost double, that the area for food-crops should not show the same growth is a matter not only for regret but for deep reflection by every one interested in the better welfare of the country, so far as the annual food-supplies are concerned.

To us, again, it is a further matter of regret that the substitution of the system of paying the land revenue in cash for that in kind, is having its pernicious effect on our ryot. Whatever may be the merits of the cash system, it is to be feared it is not exactly suited to the cultivators of the country. The *kind* system previously in vogue was automatic in its incidence, and so far was most conducive to the happiness of the ryot. Whatever the condition of the crops, he had enough food grain to last him for domestic consumption. If the crop was 16 annas, he paid in proportion to the state in kind. If it was 8 annas the proportion to be paid to the

State would diminish. Thus, the State dues fluctuated according to the condition of the crops, while the factor of food for annual domestic consumption remained constant. This system, in a great measure, tended to alleviate distress at the very outset of the scarcity. The cash system is wanting in this element and so far is defective.

This leads me, to rivet your attention on the great danger looming in the near future in connection with our agrarian problem. It is, I admit, a gigantic problem and has been staring our rulers in the face for many a year past. Now and again palliatives have been applied by names of legislation. But palliative measures, you will admit are, after all, no permanent solution of the problem. A broad, comprehensive, and practical solution is imperative, and it will require the highest experience and statesmanship to devise a remedy which may cure the disease, which is growing year by year and deepening in its intensity. I entreat you all to reflect on this grave situation, for, to my mind, the greatest danger to our country, in the near future, is what may arise from agrarian agitation. There is nothing like the rebellion of the belly. Government has been for years most unwisely spending millions against the so-called external danger. The expenditure is said to be an insurance against invasions, and yet we have a terrible invasion arising from hunger within the country itself, while there is no serious effort yet made to build an insurance against such internal danger. This must be, to all of us, a matter of the deepest regret. Let it be our endeavour, to the best of our power and ability, to assist the Government in its arduous task by suggesting suitable remedies. Two years ago, Sir Antony Macdonnell, as the Home Secretary of the Government of India, informed the public, from his place in the Supreme Legislative Council, that Government had on the anvil such a broad and comprehensive solution of the agrarian difficulty. Let us hope that, as soon as the hands of the Government are free from famine, it may devote all its ability and energy on this important topic. Let it be the good fortune of our present Viceroy, the liberal and sympathetic Earl of Elgin to inaugurate such a practical agricultural reform as may restore agricultural prosperity to India and extricate her royts from



their present impoverished and distressed situation and earn for his lordship a deep and lasting gratitude.

The next subject of importance is that of the growing expenditure of the Administration, both in its Civil and Military Branch.

The famine has conclusively demonstrated, beyond all other facts and all other statistics, the existence of the poverty of India to which our patriotic Grand Old Man, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, has been persistently drawing the serious attention of our rulers. That one main source of that poverty is the annual drain of millions of the national wealth, is now admitted everywhere. None can deny the fact, however plausibly it may be explained away. When we come to analyse the cause of that drain, we are confronted with the enormous expenditure incurred in England on civil and military persons, India office establishments, and what are generally called, Home Charges. More or less, they are undoubtedly the outcome of the costly foreign agency in the administration a subject on which the Congress has continued to express its emphatic opinion from time to time during the twelve years of its existence. I do not propose to enter here into the details of this grave economic phenomenon. But to us it is a matter of some satisfaction to know that, in respect to the costliness of the administration, there is now sitting a Royal Commission to investigate the whole subject, a Commission which is the direct fruit of the agitation by this Congress, and by none more than Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and Sir William Wedderburn. None can deny that, but for their strenuous exertions in Parliament to have this Commission appointed, India to-day would have been still without any inquiry. The last one was in 1874. But the Fawcett Committee, as was called, concluded its sittings without a report. This Commission, however, has had now thirty sittings and has already recorded the evidence of expert officials, both in active employ and in retirement. Among the latter are two distinguished ex-Finance Ministers, Sir David Barbour and Sir Auckland Colvin, and Captain Hext. It is a gratification to see from their evidence that they have made out a strong case for greater control over the expenditure of the Government of India, especially military and naval ;

the two ex-Finance Ministers are of opinion that, with a pro-military Viceroy, the chances of his dominating his whole Council and incurring any amount of military expenditure of an irresponsible character, in league with the military element in the Executive Council, are many which can be hardly said to be conducive to the interests of the already overburdened taxpayers. These retired officials have also given their opinion that the limits of taxation have been already strained and pointed out the danger of further taxation. Sir David Barbour again has admitted that Parliamentary control over all expenditure, as wisely suggested by Sir William Wedderburn is expedient. He will not, however, give his unqualified concurrence to the scheme which requires modification. So far, it may be observed that the evidence is satisfactory and in the very direction the Congress has for years been pointing out. Again, it must be said that the evidence of Sir Edwin Collen has completely established the contention of the Congress regarding the appalling growth of military expenditure, even after making all allowances for necessary and unavoidable increases. Mr. Stephen Jacob, too, whose evidence was exhaustive, has made out a case as to the unfair character of expenditure which the Home Office foists on India. You are aware that the Congress, as well as the Government of India, are at one on the question of the apportionment of Home Charges. And Mr. Jacob's evidence is therefore eminently satisfactory in this respect. Let us, gentlemen, do all in our power to further strengthen the hands of our Indian Government by once more placing on record our opinion regarding the financial injustice from which India has been suffering for many years past. If the Royal Commission does nothing else but recommends a fair apportionment of the charges to be borne by India and England respectively, it will have rendered the greatest service to this country and justified its appointment. Lastly, it is a pleasure to notice that thanks to the persistent efforts of the representatives on behalf of India—Sir W. Wedderburn and Messrs. Dadabhai Naoroji and Caine—the Commission has at last allowed reporters to attend its sittings. •Publicity adds to the value of public enquiry. The

Congress owes a deep debt of gratitude to these gentlemen for their disinterested exertions throughout in this matter. Let me add here that my indefatigable friend Mr. D. E. Wacha has been elected by the Bombay Presidency Association to proceed to England and to give his evidence before the Royal Commission, and I have no doubt whatever that zealous and hard-working as he has been throughout his life in the cause of our country and a master as he is of the facts and figures regarding Indian finance, his evidence will be of very great use to us and assist the Commission in coming to the right conclusion.

I will now proceed to another important topic on which not only the Congress has expressed its own views, but every Provincial Conference in the country has done the same. I mean the reform, which is absolutely necessary and expedient, in connection with the discussion of Imperial and Provincial Budgets. Though we all appreciate the privilege conferred on the expanded Legislative Councils to discuss the budget, there is no power to move amendments and vote on it. So far all life is taken out of these budget debates. And for all practical purposes, the discussion is purely academic. Though this is the fourth year of the expanded Councils, the most pungent criticism on the budget in the Imperial Council makes no difference whatever and has no practical effect. Though the representatives of the public give voice to public opinion in the Council Chamber, their utterances go unheeded. This is not a satisfactory state of matters. If budgets are to be popular and if the people and the press are to influence these for good, it is essential that the budgets should be voted upon. Otherwise, budget discussions will remain the farces that they are, and it is to be earnestly hoped that our rulers will see their way to instituting an early reform in this matter. The fear that the Government may be over-ridden is groundless. There is not a Council in the empire in which the official element does not preponderate, and it is absurd to expect that Government could at all be swamped. It is a curious anomaly that, though in Local Self-Government the representatives of the people can discuss their civil finances, and divide on them they can not do so on the larger subject of the

finances of the province and the whole empire. I repeat, therefore, the hope I have already expressed that the Government will at an early day, see the reasonableness, aye, the justice of our demand and grant us the same as conducive to the greater welfare and contentment of the people

Since our last sitting (at Poona) the cruel hand of death has deprived us of several of our most energetic workers, friends and sympathisers. Foremost among them stands the name of the late Mr. Mano Mohun Ghose, an enthusiastic and steady worker from the early years of this movement. His great abilities and rare legal acumen, his especial study of Indian questions, especially the urgent need of the separation of judicial from executive functions, his untiring zeal and moderation, his great powers and readiness in debate and wide-spread influence combined to make him best fitted to espouse his country's cause. His sudden and untimely removal from our midst leaves a blank which it will be hard to fill, but his services to the Congress will keep his memory always green in the annals of this movement. In the death of Rao Bahadur H. H. Dhruva of Gujarat, a scholar of European reputation, who represented H. H. the Gaekwar at the Norway and Sweden Oriental Congress, our movement loses another worker, whose zeal and enthusiasm for the Congress knew no bounds; he went from village to village pleading the Congress-cause, and spared neither time nor money in its advocacy. He was a District Judge on our side of the country, but as soon as he was freed from the trammels of office, the first thing he did was to attend the Karachi Provincial Conference in the scorching heat of May last, and died within a fortnight of his return from that place. Western India, especially Gujarat, will long mourn his loss. By the death of Mr. C. Narayana Swami Naidu of Nagpore, the Congress has lost another staunch supporter to whose enthusiasm the entire success which attended the Nagpore Congress was due.

You are all aware that the reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Empress of India has recently exceeded in duration that of any of Her Most Excellent Majesty's predecessors, (Cheers) and this auspicious event is to be celebrated in or about June next. Whatever may be the differ-

ences between the different races inhabiting this vast country on political or other grounds, the whole of India is unanimous in the opinion that Her Majesty has throughout her reign been ever anxious for the welfare of all her Indian subjects and has ever treated them with the same kindness and with the solicitude with which she has treated all her other subjects. To Her Majesty all her subjects are equal without any distinction of caste, creed, race or colour. She is the ever-affectionate mother of all her subjects, and all her subjects, whether near her or far away from her, are to her, her children. (Cheers) Whatever might be the political views of Her Majesty's ministers for the time being, whoever might be in authority under Her Majesty in India, Her Majesty has throughout thrown the great weight of her high authority in favour of equal treatment of all her subjects alike. You are all aware of the great Proclamation from Her Majesty to the people of the country, and which Proclamation is rightly regarded by the people of this country, as their great Charter and is cherished accordingly. You are all aware that Her Majesty issued the said Proclamation unasked, and thus did an act of a signal, illustrious, very rare and unrivalled magnanimity, an act fraught with seeds of deep and abiding value. That she, the august sovereign of an Empire, over which the sun never sets, that she, the constitutional ruler of a country that leads the advanced guard in the march of liberty and of civilization, should deign to look over and care for us, who have fallen back amongst stragglers in the rear, is in itself a proof of her high generosity. It is not for us and in this place to pass in review the important incidents of her long, glorious and illustrious reign. Suffice it to say that the Victorian era will be ever remembered throughout the British Empire with deep feelings of pride and pleasure, and in the rest of the world with those of wonder and admiration. Let, therefore, this Congress, of delegates from all parts of India humbly offer its dutiful and loyal congratulations to Her most Gracious Majesty, the Queen Empress on her memorable, beneficent and glorious reign, exceeding in length of time the reign of any of her predecessors, and heartily wish her many more and happy years of rule over the great British Empire, Let us all fervently pray that

benign and merciful Providence may shower over her its choicest blessings, and guide her in futures as it has guided her in the past, in the path of duty and of righteousness, and that she may be enabled to complete her glorious work in India by bestowing on her grateful Indian subjects the same rights and privileges as are enjoyed by her British subjects, by removing all disabilities which still cling to us, notwithstanding Her Royal Mandate to the contrary. By conferring on us the boon we ask for, in fulfilment of her own gracious Proclamation, Her Majesty will not only command the prayers of her Indian subjects, but also secure the sympathies of the whole civilized world. Her sagacious clemency will ever live in the hearts of her Indian subjects, and will indeed assure the prosperity, as well as the continued and devoted loyalty, of India. The English nation is well known for its manliness and manliness is associated with love of justice, generosity and intellect. It is the force of character, as also the force of circumstances, that have given Englishmen their present power. In fact, they are masterful men, and we trust they will therefore join with us in our prayers to our and their Sovereign on this auspicious occasion, and thus assist in inaugurating a truly liberal measure of reform, and thereby earn credit and achieve a reputation of which all manly hearts ought to be proud.

It now remains for me to say that in the discussion of the several important matters that will be placed before you for your consideration, you will show the same moderation, both of language and thought, as you have hitherto displayed. May merciful Providence guide us all, both you and myself, in the discharge of our duties on this important occasion, and may our deliberations contribute to the benefit of all concerned.—(Loud and prolonged cheering.)

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## HON. NAWAB SYED MOHAMMED, 1213.

BROTHER-Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I thank you most heartily for the honour you have done me by unanimously electing me to preside over this great national assembly. I consider it is not merely an honour but a duty which every citizen owes to his country to respond cordially to any call which may be made upon him to assist in an undertaking which has for its object the advancement, welfare and happiness of his fellow-countrymen.

The Congress has from its very inception set before itself the ideal of a united Indian Nationality and has been consistently advocating the cause of the Indian people as a whole without being influenced by party or sectarian considerations incompatible with that high ideal. The changes that the country has undergone during the last one generation, that is, since this organisation came into existence, are immense and the Congress, I think, may well take credit for bringing about not a few of them. My predecessors have advocated reforms in the administration of the country for which they considered it was ripe, and it is my good fortune to preside at a time when some of the more important reforms have been carried out and are in working order. The concessions made to the Indian public opinion as represented by this Assembly are in no small measure due to the sympathetic consideration which it received at the hands of Lords Morley and Minto. The foresight and statesmanlike grasp of the problems affecting our country displayed by them at a critical time saved it from drifting into a situation extremely disastrous and alarming, raised the reputation of British statesmanship higher than ever and earned for them the abiding gratitude of the people.

With the accomplishment of some of the more important reforms, it appears to me that this organisation has entered on a new phase of its existence which must be marked by greater practicality and directness of aim. In this view the position of your President is rendered more difficult,

and I confidently look to your cooperation to lighten the task that devolves upon me. I propose to confine myself only to a few subjects which demand our immediate attention.

It has been said, of course, by some friendly critics of ours, that with the introduction of these necessary and much delayed reforms, the need for an organisation such as the Congress has ceased, inasmuch as the various enlarged Legislative Councils are representing the wants and requirements of the people to the Government and are exercising a real influence over the administration. I readily admit that the new Councils go a great way in that direction and are really taking a very useful share in the administration. But I emphatically differ from the view that the Congress has outlived its days. As I have said before, we have entered on a new phase which is bound to prove more useful and beneficial alike to the Rulers and the Ruled. There are many questions requiring settlement in which we are deeply interested and which can be dealt with only by such an organisation as this.

Gentlemen, fortunately for us our interests are placed by Providence under the fostering care of a benevolent monarch whose first concern is the happiness and well-being of his subjects. In reply to the address presented to His Imperial Majesty at Bombay, on the eve of his departure to England after the historical and ever memorable Coronation Durbar at Delhi, our beloved Sovereign exhorted us, his subjects, in these words —

“We fervently trust that our visit may by God’s grace conduce to the general good of the people of this great continent. Their interests and well-being will always be as near and as dear to me as those of the millions of my subjects in other quarters of the globe. It is a matter of intense satisfaction to me to realise how all classes and creeds have joined together in the true-hearted welcome which has been so universally accorded to us. Is it not possible that the same unity and concord may for the future govern the daily relations of their private and public life? The attainment of this would indeed be to us a happy outcome of our visit to India. To you, the representatives of Bombay, who have greeted us so warmly on our arrival and departure,



I deliver this our message of loving farewell to the Indian Empire."

These are noble words and they have won our admiration and respect for his Majesty, and our hearts are filled with gratitude for such kindly sentiments. It is abundantly clear that His Majesty is fully conscious of the responsibilities of his exalted position and should therefore be rightly regarded as the "Shadow of God", on earth. When we are the subjects of the same Sovereign, are living in the same country which is our home, are governed by the same laws, are desirous of making progress in all walks of life and have the same aspirations, then, may I venture to ask what prevents us Muhammadans, Christians, Parsis, and Hindus of all classes from joining hands together for achieving the common object? It is my firm belief that our united and joint action will prove more advantageous and beneficial to ourselves than making an advance by divisions. Whatever progress we have been able to make, and I may say we have made remarkable progress during the last thirty years, is largely due to the progressive tendency of our Government and their sympathy with the wants and aspirations of the people. And we look forward to the liberal instincts of our Government for granting to us from time to time concessions, which we may claim that we deserve. It is a matter of common knowledge that the British Government are always desirous of lifting up the people under their charge, and if we show that we deserve success by working on proper lines, "there is no height to which, under the aegis of the British Crown, we may not rise".

In the eloquent address delivered by the late Mr. Budruddin Tyabjee as the President of the Third Congress held at Madras in 1887, he said :—

"It has been urged in derogation of our character as a representative national gathering, that one great and important community—the Mussulman Community—has kept aloof from the proceedings of the two last Congresses. Now, gentlemen, this is only partially true, and applies to one particular part of India, and is moreover due to certain especial local and temporary causes."

These temporary causes alluded to by Mr. Tyabjee are now gradually disappearing with the progress of education and it is a happy sign of the advancing times that there is an increasing rapprochement between Hindus and Mussulmans—a rapprochement emphasised this year by the fact that the “All-India Muslim League,” during its session in Lucknow, has adopted the following resolution, *viz.* :—

“That “All-India Muslim League” places on record its firm belief that the future development and progress of the people of India depend on the harmonious working and co-operation of the various communities and hopes that leaders on both sides will periodically meet together to find a *modus operandi* for joint and concerted action in questions of public good.”

Another resolution which the League has adopted defines its object as “the attainment under the aegis of the British Crown of a system of Self-Government suitable to India.” I cordially welcome the spirit in which these resolutions are conceived, and I rejoice in the changed attitude which the Muslim League has adopted in its political course of action and in the happy and harmonious progress which it foreshadows for the Muhammadan and Hindu communities. My friend, the Hon’ble Mr. Muhammad Shafi, who presided at that session of the League, referring to this question in his interesting address, said :—

“The adoption of the alternative proposal put forward by some of our friends that the League should set up Colonial form of Government in India as its ultimate goal is, in my opinion, inadmissible as well as politically unsound. The political conditions, internal and external, prevailing in the British Colonies have no analogy whatsoever with those obtaining in India and I am in entire accord with my friend the Hon’ble Mr. Jinnah in thinking that the adoption of any course other than the one proposed by the Council would be absolutely unwise. Moreover, for a political organisation in any country circumstanced as India is and more particularly when passing through a transitional period, the adoption of a definite form of Government as the ultimate goal of its ambitions is opposed to principles of practical statesmanship.”

I need not pause to dwell on the criticism which is levelled at the ideal of the Colonial form of Self-Government adopted by the Congress and takes in lieu of it Self-Government suitable to India. At the same time I cannot pass on without pointing out that the term "Colonial form of Government" is sufficiently elastic and is in no way restrictive. Self-Government, as established in the various Colonies, is not on the same footing, but is based on different forms of constitution suitable to the conditions of each Colony and its position in relation to the Empire. Therefore, the ideal which the Congress adopted a few years ago after mature consideration and with the advice of its friends and supporters in England, was in my opinion a practical solution of the difficulties that were then confronting us. We ourselves knew the difficulties of adopting any definite ideal while the country was passing through a transition, and the term, as I have said before, covers every possible form of government which may be ultimately decided upon. If it is definite, it is in one respect only, in that it affirms and proclaims the acceptance of the unalterable and necessary condition of British supremacy. In my opinion both the ideals are identical and I do not find any substantial difference in them, but only a difference of language. There is a real concord in sentiment between the two communities and it goes without saying that no Colonial form of Self-Government can hold good in India which is not modified by and adjusted to the conditions of this country. We may depend upon it that the leaders of thought in India will not accept an arrangement that falls short of their expectations and aspirations and, therefore, not suitable to their country. After all, it is a matter of detail and perhaps of academic interest. We are concerned with enunciating principles and are not and can not be discussing details here at this stage. A genuine desire on the part of all concerned to solve the problems confronting us will remove all differences and misunderstandings. It is therefore eminently desirable that the leaders of both communities should come face to face to find a modus operandi approaching the questions vitally affecting our well-being in a spirit of conciliation and fraternal co-operation.

Gentlemen, I do not wish that our efforts should resemble that of a captain who goes with a few followers to explore an unknown part of the globe or one who climbs upon a certain peak in the solitude of the Himalayan region to discover its relative position with that of other hills. Our common sense teaches us that the entire population of the country composed of all sections, united and resolute, should raise itself from the depths of disunion and dissension, to the elevated plane of constitutional method for the purpose of representing our wants and requirements to the Government. My opinion is therefore emphatic that the existence of such an organization as this is absolutely necessary in the future as it has been in the past. In fact our political propaganda is about to receive that accession of strength which is so very essential to the achievement of the common ideal. For in the words of Mr Syed Wazir Hasan :—

“The ideal of Self-Government which the All-India Muslim League has placed on its programme is an important step towards the formation of that great nationality for the building of which all Indians are aspiring.”

I rejoice to see a conclusive proof that the members of the religious fraternity to which I belong have resolved not to live in a state of perpetual isolation from other communities, even though it may be “splendid isolation.” In support of this I repeat the words of my friend, Mr. Syed Wazir Hasan “That the progress of their common motherland must depend on a hearty co-operation among all persons.” I still more rejoice to find that it is not due to temporary or accidental causes that this new policy has been decided upon, but is the direct result of circumstances which exist and are incessantly working to remind them of higher conceptions of duty and patriotism.

Gentlemen, it is sometimes said that the policy of our Rulers is one of “divide and rule.” But the observations of Mr. Montagu, in the course of his Indian Budget Speech in the House of Commons, in August last, clearly show that the present Government at any rate, are anxious that harmony and co-operation should exist between the various races professing different religions in India, especially Hindus and Mussulmans. Our Under-Secretary of State observed :—

"I said something about the relations between the Mussulman and Hindu some years ago. I think it is possible to say something more to-day, because it is difficult for Indian national ideals to take any intelligible or any satisfactory form so long as the great Mussulman community stands apart from the rest of the Indian population. I am confident of the future. I believe that the Indian people of all races know fully well to-day that the desire and the intention of the Government, communicated to all its officers and understood by them, as that there should be complete harmony between all the races there. The maxim divide et impera—one of the most dangerous maxims—has no place in our text-book of statesmanship. I can state emphatically that, if the leaders of the Mussulman and Hindu communities could meet and settle amongst themselves some of the questions which from time to time arise out of, and foster differences of opinion and tradition, they would find ready co-operation from the Government."

Happily for us, the policy of Government at present is one of unite and rule and it would be a great mistake on our part if we do not take advantage of it and utilize it to our full benefit; for our doing so would not only conduce to the progress of our country but would be a solid contribution towards the stability of British Rule.

Gentlemen, I entirely agree with Mr. Syed Wazir Hasan when he says that Mussulmans were not conscious of Indian politics because of their backwardness in education and "when once the two communities shared the same temper as regards Western education, and the educational disparity between them was removed, national unity would be assured." I feel I cannot conclude my observations on this all-important question without referring to the appeal which my friend Mr. Wazir Hasan so eloquently and earnestly made to his Hindu fellow-countrymen to lend every assistance they could to the Muslim community. He appealed not only to their magnanimity but also to their political capacity to remove the existing educational disparity which stood in the way of unity and progress. I desire to associate myself most cordially with this appeal and I feel sure that my Hindu brethren will heartily reciprocate and respond to it by acting up to the

sentiment conveyed by it. Indeed they have given manifest proof of this disposition by their cordial and ready sympathy with our efforts to give succour to our wounded and distressed fellow co-religionists in the late Balkan War. If this spirit of co-operative and mutual good-will is maintained and steadily promoted, the day should be near at hand when the two sister-communities will be found working shoulder to shoulder for the cause of their common motherland and towards the realisation of their national destiny.

Gentlemen, the foremost question that is just now agitating the public mind in this country is the question of our brethren in South Africa. The tale of woe that has been reaching us from there since the Boer country became part of the British Empire, is really heart-rending and that the responsible British statesmen should have been so far unable to do anything by way of attempting a settlement fills us with profound sorrow, almost with despair. We know the hardships to which our fellow-countrymen are subjected and we cannot pay a fitting tribute in words to the courageous manner in which they are enduring those hardships ; for, they are confident that British justice and sense of fair-play will ultimately prevail. Gentlemen, this unfortunate question has assumed an acute form and reached a stage where we have to pause and ask, whether we are not British subjects. The treatment accorded to Indians clearly shows that the Colonists take it for granted that we are not. At any rate, they have so far failed to recognise the claim of the Indians to consideration as British subjects. The war with the Transvaal was undertaken mainly, if not solely, on the subjects and it is to be greatly deplored that their position should have become much worse after the incorporation of the country into the world-renowned British Empire than it was ever before. May I ask in your name that, when the object with which that costly war was undertaken is not gained, where is the justification for it ? I have the authority on this point of no less a person than the Marquis of Lansdowne who was Minister for War when the conflict began and was well-qualified to make a pronouncement on the situation by reason of his having been the Viceroy of India previously. Lord Lansdowne, speaking at Sheffield in 1899, said :—

"A considerable number of the Queen's Indian subjects are to be found in the Transvaal, and among the many misdeeds of the South African Republic, I do not know that any fills me with more indignation than its treatment of these Indians. And the harm is not confined to the sufferer on the spot; for what do you imagine would be the effect produced in India, when those poor people return to their country to report to their friends that the Government of the Empress, so mighty and irresistible in India, with its population of three hundred millions, is powerless to secure redress at the hands of a small South African State?"

We cannot be too thankful to Lord Ampthill who has taken up our cause in South Africa in right earnest. His sympathy for the people of this country which he uniformly manifested during his term of Governorship in Madras has endeared him to all of us. And as a very large number so immigrants go from the Southern Presidency, it is but fitting that his Lordship should raise his voice in defence of the rights of those whom he had governed with sympathy and benevolence. Lord Ampthill, referring to the speech of Lord Lansdowne, aptly observes:

"Those were far-sighted and prophetic words, for at that time India was quite unconscious of the indignity, and it is only after the lapse of a decade that we have seen "the effect produced in India."

The views expressed in 1899 by Lord Selborne, who afterwards became High Commissioner at the Cape, were no less emphatic than those of Lord Lansdowne and I make no apology for repeating them here:

"Was it or was it not," asked Lord Selborne, "our duty to see that our dusky fellow-subjects in the Transvaal where they had a perfect right to go, should be treated as the Queen in our name had promised they should be treated? If they agreed with him and admitted that these were questions which we had to answer as trustees before our fellow-countrymen and before history, then they would agree with him also that the path of duty was to be ruled not by sentiment, but by plain facts. We were trustees for our brothers all over the world,—Trustees also for our fellow-subjects of different races and different colours. For all those and the unborn

children of these. Therefore, the test we had to apply in an emergency like this was the simple test of duty. Was it or was it not our duty to see that the rights and the future interests of those he had named should be maintained? Was the British Government going to make its name respected and to have the pledges given by it faithfully observed? Was it going to see that the British subject wherever he went all over the world, whether he were white or black was to have the rights which his Queen had secured for him?"

Far from any indications appearing that their lot would, in a measurable distance of time, be made less intolerable to them, they are being subjected in an ever-increasing degree to fresh disabilities and indignities such as are traceable clearly to the inebriation of the Boer mind caused by a sudden acquisition of independence and power. Apart from higher considerations of justice, fairness and humanity, the consideration of Imperial interests, as to how their attitude and conduct towards the Indian subjects of His Majesty will affect the prestige of the Empire to which the Boer as well as the Indian owes allegiance is deliberately disregarded by the Union Government. The fate of one hundred and fifty thousands of our brethren and countrymen settled in South Africa can not be a matter of indifference to us, as I am sure it cannot be to our Rulers. The heroic struggle that they are carrying on against overwhelming odds evokes our heart-felt sympathy for them and our deepest indignation against their oppressors. But, gentlemen, what could our sympathy and indignation do in this situation? We can send, as indeed we are already sending so liberally, pecuniary relief to the oppressed, but we can not restrain the hand that oppresses. It is for the Imperial Government to step in and alter the course of things in favour of our brethren. We have had any amount of expressions of sympathy, of encouragement and of hope, but no prospect of action is yet within our sight. That spectacle of a world-wide Empire embracing about 500 millions of people as its subjects, being powerless to restrain an irresponsible Colony is not only unedifying in the extreme, but is incomprehensible and causes dismay to the Indian mind. The position is now vastly worse than before, not merely from the point of view of the increasing disabilities and the inter-



sity of suffering, but from the point of view of their moral effect." In the days of the Boer Government the Indian settlers had the feeling that their wrongs were due to an unjust and unsympathetic foreign State which needed to be brought to the notice of their own Government to be remedied. But to-day they find the Imperial Government standing by while blow after blow is deliberately aimed at them with terrible precision and effect. This indifference has aggravated the situation and has roused bitter feelings between two countries of the Empire and is certainly derogatory to the high character of British statesmanship. Not only that, it leads one to think that this indifference in effect encourages the South African Union in the belief that their mistaken policy has the support at the Government at Home.

It was Lord Morley who used for the first time in reference to Indians, that happy phrase "The King's equal subjects" on a memorable occasion, and later on diagnosed the South African troubles as concerned with the "bar sinister." But by a curious irony of fate Lord Morley himself was a member of the Liberal Government which granted Self-Government to South Africa. It is in the highest degree surprising that the Liberal Government did not then bestow even a thought on the condition of thousands of Indian settlers there, and did not reserve to themselves an express power of interference when an emergency arose in the broad interests of the Empire. A conference of the representatives of India, England and South Africa might be held in London in order to discuss the situation and arrive at a satisfactory solution of this problem. But, gentlemen, I have no faith in such a conference. I believe the time has come when we have to ignore the South African Union and look up to the British Government and appeal to them for intercession on our behalf. I say that we should ignore the Union, for the simple reason that the Boers will never accept our claims for better treatment, because they are convinced that the war was mainly undertaken, and have already shown, for the sake of Indian settlers and that these have been the primary cause of the loss of their former independence. The British Government are responsible for the present difficulties which they could have easily foreseen and avoided by imposing conditions

regarding the rights of Indian settlers at the time of granting Self-Government to South Africa. It is therefore I say, that we should look up to them and make an earnest appeal to them. It is a pity that the Parliament had no hand in the matter; otherwise, I am sure our friends in Parliament would have raised their voice in support of our rights. I have more faith, I confess, in retaliatory measures such as the placing of an embargo on the importation of coal from Natal into this country, and the closing of the doors of competition for the Civil Service against the South African Whites. It seems to me that these are the only weapons at present available and the Government of India should lose no time in making use of them. I am aware that these measures have the disadvantage of being merely irritating without being directly effective or inflicting any real disability on the Colonists. But their moral effect would, I am convinced, be very great on our people and will not be altogether lost on the Union Government. By having recourse to these retaliatory measures our Government would be showing before the whole world that they are in earnest and would not tolerate the ill treatment of Indian subjects of His Majesty in any part of the Empire. We have to advocate retaliatory measures, because we have been driven to do so, much against our own will. We, however, hope that the resources of representation are not yet exhausted and that the Imperial Government have not yet done their utmost to secure justice for our countrymen. While recognising that their position is one of great difficulty in view of Colonial autonomy, I would at the same time point out that the present Liberal Government have claimed great credit for unifying South Africa as a triumph in that they have applied liberal principles in their Colonial policy, and it is inconceivable that liberal principles in practice can, under any circumstances, involve injustice and oppression.

Gentlemen, at a time when the Indian sky was overcast with the darkest clouds of anxiety and grief for the sufferings of our countrymen in South Africa, H. E. the Viceroy made a pronouncement at Madras which has given immense satisfaction to the people of this country. In the course of his reply to the addresses of welcome presented by the

Mahajana Sabha and the Madras Provincial Congress Committee, His Excellency observed :

"Recently, your compatriots in South Africa have taken matters into their own hands by organising what is called passive resistance to laws which they consider invidious and unjust—an opinion which we should watch their struggles from afar can not but share. They have violated, as they intended to violate, those laws, with full knowledge of the penalties involved, and ready with all courage and patience to endure those penalties. In all this they have the sympathy of India—deep and burning—and not only of India, but of all those who like myself, without being Indians themselves, have feelings of sympathy for the people of this country."

We are extremely grateful to our popular Viceroy who has gauged the feeling in the country in the right manner and has given expression to his own sympathy with the sufferers who are engaged in the present struggle. The communique recently issued by the Government of India clearly shows that the matter is receiving their earnest attention and they are pressing the Secretary of State for an independent enquiry into the allegations of brutal treatment. I can say without any fear of contradiction that by taking up such an attitude His Excellency has rendered a signal service to the cause of the Empire.

Gentlemen, it was only the other day that His Excellency Lord Hardinge after the unfortunate occurrence at Cawnpore, went to that city like an angel of peace and gave satisfaction and contentment to the inhabitants of Cawnpore. This was a proof of His Excellency's noble-mindedness and in keeping with his reputation as a statesman of the first rank. The way in which our beloved Viceroy has identified himself with the Indian side of the South African question by his honest, sincere and courageous declaration, calls for the strongest support from us, in all his endeavours for doing justice to the millions committed to his charge. May he long live to continue to take interest in our affairs !

His Excellency Lord Hardinge with the true instincts of a great statesman rightly said in Madras that nothing but an impartial enquiry in which Indian interests are fully represented will satisfy the Indian people. What has now

been done by the Union Government shows how little regard they have for the feelings of Indians and of those who stand by them in this matter. A domestic court of enquiry composed purely of South African settlers has been constituted to enquire into Indian grievances. I do not wish to say anything against the gentlemen who compose this tribunal. They are no doubt estimable men, but they do not and can not understand our point of view; they are bred up in traditions which lead them to think that we have no rights and consequently can have no grievances. It is impossible to understand how the Home Government can have consented to the appointment of such a committee. Mr. Harcourt spoke of gentle persuasion. If this is all that can be achieved by such a procedure, it is time that other measures are adopted. I believe I am voicing your sentiments when I say that this committee inspires the people of this country with no hope and its conclusions will leave the situation unchanged. We trust that the British Cabinet will realise that the situation is becoming graver every day and that it is absolutely necessary in the interests of the Empire that a Royal Commission composed of British statesmen, of Colonials and of Indians should be appointed to carry out a searching investigation of the allegations of cruelty and in human treatment.

Gentlemen, notwithstanding the changes introduced in the Government of this country by the Morley-Minto Reform Scheme, the improvements necessary in the existing administrative machinery are many and varied. The most important of these to which I desire to draw your pointed attention is that connected with the reconstruction of the Council of the Secretary of State for India which is at present under the consideration of His Majesty's Government. Having regard to the importance of the subject, I shall with your permission deal with it in some detail.

The act of 1858 by which the Crown assumed the direct Government of this country from the Company, provided for the Secretary of State for India a Council to advise and assist him in the administration of a vast dependency, but did not in the least relieve him of the responsibility which he owed to Parliament for the proper government of this

country. The constitution and character of this Council have, with very few modifications, survived to the present day, despite the many attacks which have been made in successive years in and outside this Congress. The question of reforming this body has after all come up for consideration, and on the 31st July last, Lord Crewe made a statement in the House of Lords in which he referred to its elaborate constitution and outlined certain changes which he hoped would improve the efficiency and usefulness of this body. Lord Crewe also stated that changes which he intended to make would require statutory authority and he added that he would welcome any criticism or any fresh ideas which might be brought forward. The sole idea was, he said, to improve and as far as possible perfect the machinery by which the daily sometimes hourly, intercourse between those who represent the Imperial Government and those who control the actual Government, was carried out.

If the Congress had only to judge of this matter by the past history of that body, it is possible to come only to one conclusion, i.e. that there is no use of attempting to mend the Council and that it must be ended. Resolutions in this strain have been passed by successive Congresses and it has been shown by a series of instances, how this body consistently and steadily acted in a reactionary manner in respect of all progressive measures, and how it has managed to preserve the privileges and sustained the claims of vested interests. I need not pursue this point any further because you are familiar with it. After the appointment, however, of two Indian Members to the Secretary of State's Council, the changes in the personnel which Lord Morley introduced, and the influence of Lord Morley's own personality at the India Office went some way to make the agitation for the abolition of the Council less strong than before. The presence of the Indian members on the Council was distinctly recognised to have been of much advantage to Lord Morley himself, as affording him the Indian point of view and giving him what he called "an Indian angle of vision." Lord Crewe has, strange to say, not laid as much stress on this aspect of the matter as one would desire. But the people of India would attach the greatest importance to it, especially in view of Lord Crewe's

statement that the Council is not to be abolished or stripped of its powers. The necessity for maintaining a body in England to advise and assist the Secretary of State for India was a matter of much discussion in Parliament at the time when the Act of 1858 was passed. Lord Stanley who was then responsible for the Bill in its final form explained the object of constituting the India Council to afford the Indian Secretary the means of ascertaining the needs and requirements of the territories for whose administration he became responsible to the Parliament. The ingrained idea of the Britisher has always been to ascertain the people's needs and requirements through their representatives and this idea was frequently in evidence in the course of the debates on all the India Bills of that time. Mr. Disraeli, the Prime Minister, who was responsible for the Indian Bill No. 2, dwelt upon the desirability of introducing the representative principle in the composition of the India Council in London, but regretted that the then unsettled state of the country did not admit of a representation of the people of India itself. In the resolutions of the House of Commons upon which the last Bill was finally based, this was again referred to, but in the Bill itself the practical effect given to the principle was, curiously enough, limited to the election of a proportion of members of the Council by the Court of Directors and Proprietors of the old Company, leaving the rest to be filled by the Crown. The idea of election, moreover, was sought to be further kept up after the death of the Company, by a process of self-election by the body of members originally nominated by the Court of Directors and Proprietors who, it was assumed, represented Indian interests. In the course of his speech on the Bill, Lord Stanley observed:

"If I am told that the proposed self-election is virtually an abandonment of that elective principle which the House has sanctioned, my answer is that we are willing to introduce the elective principle upon a wider scale if it were only possible to find a fitting and satisfactory constituency. I believe that recourse to the method of election as to way to the appointments to the India Council is the first idea which has entered the mind of every person who has considered the subject. The difficulty which all persons on further consi-

deration have felt is that of constituting a constituency which would answer the purpose."

The Earl of Derby who piloted the Bill in the House of Lords also used similar language.

Such was the state of things when the Council was brought into existence. What happened subsequently is well known. While on the one hand the Council entirely deviated in its character and functions from the impress which was originally sought to be given to it, the people and the administration of India have, on the other hand, progressed so far that the necessity of ascertaining their needs and requirements by their own representative institutions has been widely recognised and acted upon. The India Council, with the modifications made in the next few years, became a mere creature of the Secretary of State, to be consulted at will by him or to be overborne by him whenever it set itself in opposition to Imperial interests. On the other hand, so far as the interests of India were concerned, the Council became, by its composition mainly from the ranks of the retired Anglo-Indian officials, a means of steady obstruction at all times to all progressive measures, very often obtaining great control and influence over successive Secretaries of State whose interest in India, with rare exceptions, has been more or less of a transitory kind and who preferred to leave the routine of administrative duties to the committee of experts which Parliament in its wisdom had provided them with.

If Lord Crewe desires that this Council should survive and be a body useful to the Secretary of State for India, he must take account, on the one hand, of the original purpose for which the Council was instituted and, on the other hand, of the extent to which that purpose needs to be carried out under present conditions. In the first place, I think it will be agreed that, whatever the reforms introduced in the constitution and functions of the Indian Councils in England, they should not in any sense be treated as interfering with the right of the people of England to require the British Parliament, until such time as India attains to responsible Self-Government within itself, to watch and control as legitimately as is necessary and possible, the administration of India through a Minister responsible to Parliament. In the

next place, whatever changes might be made in the India Council, they must strictly preserve that body as an advisory one and must not in any manner convert it into an administrative machine. In legal theory, no doubt, such a change would not and could not be effected, because it would involve a fundamental antagonism to the first principle of British Constitution, namely, the supremacy of the Parliament; but practically the changes in procedure now contemplated, I fear, are calculated to result in the establishment of an administrative body which would virtually be irresponsible. Lastly the changes in its constitution should be such as to enable it to be, in practice as in theory, really advisory; that is, it should be so constituted as to make it capable of promoting Indian aspirations and giving steady and constant advice to the Secretary of State in respect of the needs of progressive administration. If it was in 1858 considered essential that an elective element should exist in the Council, it needs no saying that at the present day it is absolutely indispensable.

In view of the express declaration of the Secretary of State that he has decided to retain the Council, I do not wish to discuss its abolition; and since suggestions have been invited, I think it is the duty and the privilege of this Congress to give its best consideration to the subject. The difficulty of providing an electorate for the India Council to represent the wants and wishes of the Indian people themselves has now ceased to exist. With the progress which has been achieved in this country within recent years and with the large and diverse forms of electorates which have been created all over the country, it is impossible to put forward the excuse of want of a proper electorate at the present day. Non-official members of the Provincial Councils, the bulk of whom are elected and represent the diverse interests of the people, have proved a perfectly satisfactory electorate in each Province, to return the elected representatives of the people to the Imperial Council, and no reason could be adduced for the Government not availing themselves of these electorates and the elected non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council itself, as proper constituencies for returning members to the India Council in England. We must, therefore, strongly urge on the Secretary of State for India that,



in any reform he may contemplate in the constitution of the India Council, a proportion of not less than one-third of the members of that Council should consist of Indians elected by the non-official members of the different Legislative Councils in India.

The next requirement will be to confine the functions of the Council of India to those of advice, consultation and assistance and not to extend them to those of administration. It is unlikely that the Council would consist of entirely elected members; but even if it did, it would be an unsound policy to convert the Council into an administrative body. What Lord Crewe contemplates, however, is a proposal to attach each member of the Council to particular departments of India Office and initiate a system by which they may co-operate upon a particular work and by this means he hopes to initiate far more direct communication between the different official departments of the Government of India itself, without the necessity of passing through the various processes which at present are necessary.

He considers, moreover, that from this point of view a Council of eight would be adequate, with a provision for ten including a financial expert. Now the effect of this proposed change must be apparent to all close observers, and that is, that it will tend to tighten the control of the India Office over the departments of the Government of India on the one side, and, on the other, it will make the influence and power of each member of the Council of India in respect of the department to which he is attached much more effective than it can ever be under the present system of committees. It is obvious that in the future such everyday control and guidance over the Government of India, as may be necessary, should be provided in India itself through the means of the expanded Legislative Councils and not by means of a Secretary of State in England placed virtually under the guidance of retired officials. Lord Crewe, no doubt, says that his system would not make them controllers of the particular departments. But the result of the system which he proposes is bound to make them so. I would advocate the continuance of the Council as an advisory body, even if it involves "cumbersome and dilatory procedure," with the consonance with the

original intention of working it up to the constitutional standard, by the admission of a larger number of Indians than at present. With this end in view I would strongly urge the fixing of a limit much higher than what has now been proposed by the Marquis of Crewe. The proposal of Lord Crewe, moreover, will create a dual control over the departments administered in India and will lead to an increase in correspondence between India and the India Office involving considerable delay in the settlement of pending questions, not to speak of possible friction. Correspondence with the Secretary of State is a well-known means of discouraging discussion in the Indian Legislative Councils and the more direct communication which Lord Crewe hopes to introduce, is calculated to affect the rights and privileges of the representatives of the people in our Legislative Councils in a serious manner.

I have already stated that an elective Indian element is essential and if it be not practicable to introduce it in the Council in respect of more than one-third of its strength the remaining two-thirds might consist of other elements calculated to maintain its strength as a consultative and deliberative body. I would, therefore, suggest that another one-third should consist of members of Parliament and other men acquainted and in touch with the public and political life in England, while the remaining one-third may consist of ex-officials from India—Indian or European—who may be expected to bring to the Council the knowledge of actual administration which they have gained in this country. I am sure you will bestow your best attention on these suggestions and I would request you to deliberate upon them and express your opinion for the consideration of the Secretary of State who has invited it. I am confident that His Lordship will be pleased to give your proposals the weight they deserve as emanating from this National organisation.

Coming to the questions connected with the reformed Council, I need not refer to the regulations in detail which were framed by the Indian Government for carrying out the Morley-Minto Reform Scheme. The Congress has in successive sessions expressed its regret that the regulations have not been made in the same liberal spirit in which the original

reform-despatches were conceived. The public being anxious to give a fair start to the scheme did not express their full sense of dissatisfaction with the proposed regulations, especially as they were reassured in this behalf by the express declarations of Lord Minto's Government at the time, which were as follows:—

The Governor-General-in-Council is conscious that many of the details of the scheme which is being introduced may be found on trial to be unsatisfactory or capable of improvement. Experience alone can show how far methods which are new to India give to the different classes and interests a measure of representation proportionate to their importance and influence, and to what extent an untrained electoral machinery is suitable to the varying circumstances of the different Provinces and the numerous electorates. Defects will no doubt be discovered when the rules are put into operation, but, if this proves to be the case, the law admits of the regulations being amended without difficulty.

It was hoped, therefore, that the anomalies and serious defects, both of detail and of principle, which were found to exist in the regulations would be rectified at the first opportunity which presented itself after the first elections had been held and the Reformed Councils constituted. It has been, therefore, a matter of extreme disappointment to the public in India that the revision of the Council regulations which was made last year was confined to making a few trivial changes and introducing a few amendments in consequence of the transference of the Imperial capital to Delhi and of the other changes embodied in the Delhi despatches. In the constitution of the Legislative Councils different proportions have been fixed in respect of the official and non-official, as well as the elected and nominated elements in the various Provinces, much of which to the ordinary mind seems to be founded on no intelligible principle of differentiation. Bengal from the first started with an elected non-official majority in its Legislative Council and in the redistribution of territories made in 1912, both old Bengal and new Bihar have been given two separate Legislative Councils having elected non-official majorities. On the other hand, Madras and Bombay the oldest of the provinces, have been provided with

a non-official majority composed of nominated and elected members barely sufficient to satisfy the regulations.

By far the most serious of the drawbacks in the regulations which have been allowed to exist in the revised regulations, are those relating to the disqualifications for membership, the arbitrary and unreasonable manner in which restrictions are imposed on candidates seeking election to the absolute discretion of the Executive Government. It is our duty once again to urge an immediate revision of the regulations, so as to make the non official majorities in all Provincial Councils really effective for practical work, and to remove invidious differences in the qualifications prescribed for candidates seeking election.

In spite of the repeated and unanimous requests of the people of the United Provinces for the establishment of the Executive Council there, the question is hung up without the authorities assigning cogent reasons. Sir John Hewitt's opposition to the proposal is too well-known to you, but with the change of the Lieutenant-Governorship in the United Provinces, it was hoped that it would receive sympathetic consideration at the hands of Sir James Meston, and it is a matter of considerable surprise to those who knew His Honour as a man of liberal and progressive views, that he has not yet formulated proposals for establishing an Executive Council. In view of the fact that this question was the subject of a resolution which was moved in his Council and which received strong support from the non-official members, I am hopeful that it will receive due consideration at the hands of the Government of India and the Secretary of State.

As regards the Imperial Legislative Council I may say that the representation of some of the Provinces is defective and for this reason I would suggest an increase of at least half a dozen seats on the Council and they are being thrown open for popular election. We all know that at present we have at the head of the Government of India a sagacious statesman whose far-sighted and sympathetic policy has endeared him to the people of this country, and I fervently hope that His Excellency Lord Hardinge before laying down

the reins of his exalted office will remove the present defects in the Imperial Council and make it fully representative.

When the Government of India in 1908 submitted for approval to the Secretary of State the group of constitutional reforms which resulted in the passing of the Indian Councils Act, the Government of India claimed that their scheme as a whole "will really and effectively associate the people of India in the work, not only of occasional legislation, but of actual every-day administration." The fact that I want to emphasise here is what Lord Morley himself mentioned, that scheme of reform is not, and hardly pretends to be, a complete representation of the entire body of changes and improvements in the existing system that are evidently present to the minds of some of those whom your Government has consulted and that to the best of my judgment are now demanded by the situation described in the opening words of the despatch.

Lord Morley proceeded to point out that it is evidently desirable to present our reform of the Indian constitutional system as a whole and that from this point of view, it seems necessary to attempt without delay an effectual advance in the direction of Local Self-Government.

In is now five years since these words were written, and the Government of India are yet maturing proposals for making an advance in this direction, "without delay." The reluctance to revive the old village organisation and to establish village panchyets is particularly pronounced in some Provinces, while a degree of tardiness in considering proposals for the expansion of local and municipal administration coupled with the oft-repeated desire to hedge further advance with over-cautious restrictions, is noticeable among all grades of administrative authorities in India. Lord Morley quoted the memorable words of Lord Ripon that "It is not primarily with a view to improvement in administration that this measure is put forward and started; it is chiefly desirable as an instrument of political and popular education," and that there is little chance of affording any effective training to the people in the management of local affairs for of the non-official members thereof taking any real interest in local business, unless "they are led to feel

that real power is placed in their hands and that they have real responsibilities to discharge."

The Royal Commission on Decentralisation which submitted its report shortly after this, fully endorsed Lord Morely's views and insisted that the village should be made the starting point of public life in India, that village panchayats should be revived all over the country as the first unit of Local Government, and that the constitution and functions of other local bodies should be broadened and liberalised in various ways. The Imperial and Provincial Governments have been cogitating over this part of the recommendations now for over four years, and repeated inquiries in the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils have not so far elicited any sympathetic assurance as to the recommendations being likely to be carried out in the near future. The latest announcement is that the Government of India have submitted their proposals to the Secretary of State [and obtained his approval, and that they would shortly introduce the necessary legislation for carrying them out. It is not easy to anticipate what these proposals are, but the Congress has a right to demand that the Commission's recommendations should be fully carried out, and the proposals of the Government of India should be placed before the public as a whole and not piece-meal. We must impress upon the Government that this question should be treated as part of a progressive political policy and not as one of mere administrative exigency.

The unrest that swept over the country from one end to the other is a thing of the past, at any rate. We are no longer face to face with its turbid waters and dangerous and indidious currents, but only with some of the evils that have lain beneath the surface of the unrest and are now discernible. Now that the storm has happily passed away, let us address ourselves to the task of meeting the underlying evils in the way they ought to be. There had been steadily increasing feeling on the part of the people, of dissatisfaction with their surroundings and a steadily increasing yearning for a better and more bearable existence. Even a casual observer must be struck by the desire manifested at present on every side for more light in the shape of education,

both primary and technical. Primary Education, I need not say, is the remedy of remedies that will help the masses at present steeped in ignorance, superstition and lethargy, to get out of the slough of despond, and will teach them self-help by placing within their reach, through the medium of Literature, the benefits that would accrue from adopting modern methods and principles in their hereditary and time-hallowed occupation of agriculture and other small industries; and that will surely mould in them a frame of mind that would co-operate with the Government in any measure that may be taken for public good, by removing the disposition to believe in the ascription of wrong motives and intentions to Government as regards their particular acts and measures. In short Primary Education will give more food to the masses, reduce to an appreciable degree the acuteness of the economic problem, remove most of the social evils and conduce to the stability of the British Rule.

It is a source of great pleasure and satisfaction to observe that the recent visit of Their Imperial Majesties was an important land-mark in the history of our country. Ever since the blessed day of their advent and ever since His Imperial Majesty emphasised in his speeches the need for a wider element of sympathy in the administration of the country and pressed for a rapid advancement of education as the panacea for all our social and political evils, the essential importance of education, as a factor of national prosperity has now come to be fully recognised by the Government, and we gratefully acknowledge their earnest efforts to foster and push it forward. But at the same time we feel that they do not go far enough. The political fears that the Government entertain as regards the adoption of the principle of compulsion are altogether imaginary, and if the scheme which has been put forward is carefully considered and followed by Government, the administrative and financial difficulties with which the Government believe they are confronted, will soon disappear in practice. So long as the local institutions retain their strong official complexion, people would naturally hesitate to confide in them. But before these institutions are entrusted with the initiation and control of Primary Education, if they are made more popular and representative, the people would be glad to co-operate with

them and would even be willing to bear the imposition of an especial cess which will be ear-marked for the purpose of being devoted to Primary Education. I may point out that when, in the famous Despatch of 1854, Sir Charles Wood laid the foundation of the system of public education, a memorable advance was made. And as the authorities, with genuine statesmanlike foresight, recognised that England's prime function in India was to superintend the tranquil elevation of the moral and intellectual standard of life among the people, I fail to see any plausible reason that could be adduced against making a modest and cautious beginning to introduce compulsory and free Primary Education in selected areas that may be considered to be ripe for it.

We in this Congress have noticed with pride and satisfaction the steps that have been taken by the progressive Governments of Baroda and Mysore to push on Compulsory Primary Education in their territories. The latest to fall into line with these States in this regard is Travancore. May we not expect the action which has been taken by the enlightened Rulers of these states will be followed by the Paramount Power? I think it may not be out of place to mention here that the Acts of the Legislature creating the Universities were passed immediately after the Great Mutiny and will ever remain a striking monument of the coolness, wisdom and foresight of the British race.

Before I leave the subject of education, I must ask the Government of the country to pay more attention to Technical Education than they have done hitherto. The problem of the poor and of the submerged is not so acute in India as elsewhere. But with the steady increase in the population that has been going on, with the rise in the price of food-stuffs and with an agrarian population which has been taxed to the utmost, it requires no prophet to say that the time will come—perhaps sooner than most people imagine—when the financial resources of the country will have to be strained to the utmost to cope with the situation. It is therefore, necessary that a serious attempt should be made to push on Industrial and Technical Education by opening new schools and by subsidising at least some of the industries that deserve it.



It was that far-sighted statesman, Lord Cornwallis, who gave the Permanent Settlement to Bengal in 1793 which has proved a blessing not merely to landlords with whom it was concluded but to all classes of the community. Some portions of Madras also shared that benefit and it was the intention at the time that in other parts of India Permanent settlements should be concluded with cultivators themselves. Read's Proclamation of 1796 for the settlement of the Baramahal, Munro's evidence given before a Committee of the House of Commons in 1813, and the correspondence in the fifties and sixties regarding the introduction of a settlement, all point to the conclusion that the assessment was intended to be permanent and unalterable. The difference in system was to be only as regards the party with whom the settlement was to be concluded, but there was to be no difference in regard to permanency. It was a recognised principle during the first half of the last century that the settlement with whomsoever it was made was to be a permanent one and that the assessment should be unalterable. Subsequently, however, it was contended that the Government should not sacrifice the unearned increment to which it was entitled; but in order to minimise frequent interference which it was recognised would lead to hardship and discontent, it was decided to give permanence in the assessment for a period of years, leaving to cultivator the enjoyment of all the profits during the currency of such period. The Famine Commission of 1860 again brought forward the question of Permanent settlement. The President of the Commission stated:

"The good which has been done by partial action on sound principles is both a justification and an encouragement to further advance: and entertaining the most earnest conviction that the state interests will be alike strengthened in an increasing ratio by the step, the first, and as I believe the most important measure I have respectfully to submit for consideration is the expediency of fixing for ever the public demand on the land and thus converting settlement for perpetuity."

This recommendation was supported by the highest authorities, and the Government of India, in warmly supporting it, stated:

"His Excellency in Council believes that increased security of fixed property and comparative freedom from the interference of fiscal officers of Government will tend to create a class which, although composed of various races and creeds, will be peculiarly bound to the British rule; while under proper regulations the measure will conduce materially to the improvement of the general revenue of the Empire."

In his famous Despatch of 1862, the Secretary of State observed :

"After the most careful review of all these considerations, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the advantages which reasonably be expected to accrue, not only to those immediately connected with land, but to the community generally, are sufficiently great to justify them in incurring the risk of some prospective loss of land revenue in order to attain them, and that a settlement in perpetuity in the districts in which the conditions required are, or may hereafter be, fulfilled is a measure dictated by sound policy and calculated to accelerate the development of the resources of India, and to ensure to the highest degree the welfare and contentment of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in the country."

The above Despatch authorized a permanent settlement in tracts where four-fifths of the cultivable land had been brought under cultivation and assessed according to the then existing methods of settlement. Though this condition was found to have been fulfilled in most parts of the country, the decision was not given effect to, and with the departure of Lord Canning and the change in the ministry narrower views prevailed, with the result that, after voluminous correspondence, the sound and sympathetic policy advocated by Lord Canning and sanctioned by Sir Charles Wood was given up. Again when that illustrious statesman, the late Marquis of Ripon, was at the head of the administration, he laid down the principle that in district which had been surveyed and assessed by the Settlement Department, assessments should undergo no further revision except on the sole ground of rise in price, a step which, in the words of one of my distinguished predecessors, now no more, was the best compromise which could be effected after the old right had been sacrificed. But

on the departure of Lord Ripon from India, his proposal was vetoed by the Secretary of State in his despatch of 1885 in which, while abandoning the idea of a permanent settlement, he directed that enhancement should be based mainly on considerations of general increase in the value of land. Settlements and re-settlements are now regulated by the rules laid down in that despatch. It is admitted that in the prosperity and contentment of the vast agricultural population lies the strength of the administration and that the measure of the ryot's prosperity largely depends on the revenue that he has to pay. Though he have been contending for now more than thirty years that the ryot's burden is not susceptible of any further enhancement, the fiscal side of the question dominates the policy of the Government and they are reluctant to forego the right of enhancing the assessment which they now possess. The English nation is a manufacturing nation, while India is a purely agricultural country. While the great increase in the manufacturing activity of Great Britain has given its inhabitants such extensive scope for employment that the want of land as a field of investment and employment for labour is comparatively little felt, India has no industries other than agriculture and is under the necessity of exporting her raw products. Her one national industry, therefore, deserves the fostering care of the administration. The introduction of a Permanent Settlement, while securing the contentment and prosperity of the agricultural classes, will also indirectly augment the public revenue.

But the authorities do not seem to fully realise in practice that in a prosperous and contented peasantry lies the strength of the Empire. While doing our best to make them appreciate that the Permanent Settlement is the only solution of India's agrarian problem, it behoves us as practical men to moderate our demand to the extent to which the Government are likely to yield, never forgetting for a moment the object we have in view. It behoves us also to ask for the removal of the many serious hardships of re-settlements and the heavy burden of increasing assessments. May we not therefore reasonably urge that thirty years is too short a period for settlements and it should be extended to a period of not less

than sixty years in order to give it an appearance at least of quasi-permanency? We should also press on the attention of the Government of India the desirability of confining enhancements solely to a substantial rise in prices and of fixing a maximum limit of 12 per cent. to enhancements in revisionary settlements. It was proposed by some of our eminent men that the rules for settlement should be embodied in a legislative enactment, and this proposal has had the approval of such a high authority as the Decentralisation Commission. While the Local Government decline to allow the matter to be discussed in the Provincial Council, the Government of India are not disposed to take action in the matter. It is therefore our clear duty to press the matter on the Government of India, in order that in the absence of Permanent Settlement they may at least agree to a compromise in the direction proposed on the maxim of "Half of loaf is better than no bread."

While on this subject I should like to draw the attention of the Congress to the present grave economic situation caused by the increasing struggle for existence, the abnormal rise in prices and unemployment in the country. Foodstuffs are being sold at famine prices and enormous rise has an oppressing effect on the average man. No doubt we can understand the plausible reason often put forward that modern facilities of communications are bound to have the effect of equalising prices. At the same time we cannot lose sight of the fact that high prices in manufacturing countries do not effect the people to the same extent as they do in this country where there are no industries—the only industry being that of agriculture. It is therefore the duty of the states to find some remedy for the high prices now prevailing. I fully trust that the Government are not unmindful of their responsibility in the matter and will devise some means of checking this growing economic evil.

The question of the employment of Indians in the higher and more responsible position in the public Service of this country is not a question of merely individual careers, but is one of much higher and wider importance. Not to speak of the material and economic drain that the exclusion of Indians from higher posts in the public service of their own

country involves, it is repugnant to the nation's sense of self-respect. With the growth of intelligence and self-consciousness among the people, there is an increasing disposition on their part to compare their own position with that of other nations of the world, and to regard their present political status as incompatible with the rights of freedom and equality conferred on them by the British constitution and guaranteed to them by British traditions. In the words of Sir Thomas Munro :

"The aim of the British administration of India was to raise the minds of the natives, to raise their character and to render them worthy of filling higher situations in the management of the country, so that in fulness of time Indians would be able to frame a regular Government for themselves and to conduct and preserve it."

We feel that we are not in this respect treated in accordance with the spirit of the proclamations and promises made by the British Sovereigns, the Parliament and responsible Ministers. It is, therefore, a matter of sincere pleasure and great satisfaction to us that a Royal Commission under the able Chairmanship of that eminent and sympathetic statesman, Lord Islington, has been appointed to enquire into the questions of the public Services. Without in any way anticipating the recommendations it may make, I can say that the manner in which the Commission began to take evidence during the last cold weather, amply justifies the hope that it will do justice to Indians when it comes to formulate its final conclusions. In the course of the speech in which he opened the sittings of the Commission on the 8th of January last, at Madras, his Lordship said :

"We are confident that we shall receive such assistance and co-operation that subsequently when the fruits of our labours are published it may be found that we have reached a reasonable basis of agreement which will give satisfaction both to the just demands of the services and to the legitimate aspirations of His Majesty's Indian subjects and be consonant with the orderly development of the administration of this great country."

The remarkable insight and the keen interest displayed by Lord Islington in the course of the enquiry encourage

us in the belief that the result will be gratifying to the expectations raised in the minds of the people. It will not be out of place for me to express a hope that the much-discussed question of the separation of judicial from executive functions will receive a solution at the hands of the Commission, which will satisfy public opinion.

In the course of the evidence before the Commission, it was suggested by some of the witnesses that the Public Service in India should not be open to those Colonists who do not treat Indians on a footing of equality. And if much stress was not laid down on this, it was due to the fact that the situation in South Africa had not assumed such an acute form and so dangerous a proportion as at present. As the crisis in South Africa has become so threatening as to constitute an imminent danger to the interests of the Empire, I venture to submit to the Commission the advisability and necessity of laying down, as a matter of principle, that those Colonies which do not treat Indians as equal subjects of the King will not have a share in the administration of India, and candidates from such Colonies will be debarred from taking part in any competitive examination, or entering into any of the services of this country. In making an earnest appeal to Lord Islington and members of the Royal Commission to include this suggestion in their recommendations, I would like to point out that it is not only calculated to show to South Africa that the Commission wishes to maintain strict impartiality, but it will serve as a warning to other Colonies and prevent them from following the example of the Union Government. It will also strengthen the hands of the Government of India and the Imperial Government in any action which they may contemplate to take in an emergency.

Closely allied to the question that I have now dealt with is the question of higher career for Indians in the Army. Meeting at Karachi so close to places distinguished as the home of warlike races from whom the Indian sepoy is largely drawn, we can appropriately go into it at some length. From its earliest years the Congress has included in its resolutions a demand for the establishment of military colleges in India in which natives of India as defined by statute, may be

educated and trained for appointment as commissioned or non-commissioned officers, according to their capacity and qualifications, in the Indian Army. That demand apparently remained unheeded till the advent of Lord Curzon whose Viceroyalty was a succession of promises either broken or only partially redeemed. You may remember, gentlemen, that soon after his arrival he formed a 'cadet corps consisting of Indian Princes and Noblemen with head-quarters at Dehra-Dun. The Congress of 1901, held at Calcutta, welcomes it as the first instalment of a policy which will culminate in the establishment of military colleges, as recommended by His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, at which natives of India may be educated and trained for employment and officers of the army. The expectation was not realised and the Madras Congress in 1908 reiterated its demand, in view especially of the high recognition of the valour and fidelity of Indian troops by His late Imperial Majesty King Edward VII, in his message to the Princes and the peoples of India. Lord Minto, true to the spirit of the policy of his Government, pressed on the authorities at Home a scheme framed by his Lordship in this matter which had the full support of his Council and of the Commander-in-Chief. The words in which he referred to the scheme, in the course of a speech he delivered as Chairman of a meeting in London, on April 24, 1912, deserve repetition here. That speech seems to be a remarkable illustration of his policy, his broad sympathies and of his grasp of Indian points of view which distinguished his career in India.

His Lordship said :—

I must take friendly exception to what Sir W. C. Plowden has said as to my not having faced the question of Commission in the Army for Indian gentlemen. I can assure you that I not only faced it, but that I fought it every day. It was my hobby the whole time I was in India to try and obtain such commissions for Indian gentlemen and I hope that I had succeeded. It is curious that British opinion of to-day as regards the possibility of granting commissions is less advanced than it was a generation ago. The views of many people to-day are much behind the

times in comparison with those of distinguished officers even before the Mutiny. As long ago as 1844, Sir Henry Lawrence dealt with the question. Subsequently Lord Napier wrote a memorandum in 1885 on the same subject, stating that the Government of India had then the matter under consideration. Sir George Chesney, Sir Donald Stewart and others, all held the same views. All these distinguished officers admitted that a great injustice was being perpetrated in withholding such commissions; they maintained that young Indian gentlemen should have greater opportunities for military distinction; but at the same time they all laid down that they must not command British troops; and that the solution of the difficulty was the raising of especial Indian regiments in which Indian gentlemen should receive commissions. I am afraid that racial antipathies, however narrow many of us may think them, are much stronger in India than they are at Home. I do not know why. But at any rate, we cannot do away with these racial antipathies by word of command; the only way to lessen them is by example and by constant sympathy for our Indian fellow-subjects. By force of example and by constant sympathy, let us hope that racial prejudices may gradually disappear. Under existing conditions it would, in my opinion, be a grave mistake to appoint a young Indian of good family to a British regiment or to a regiment of the Indian Army against the wish of its British officers. It would only create friction and we should be worse off than we were before. I fought this question in India over and over again and before I came away, the Government of India, the Commander-in-Chief, and all my Council were in agreement with me that the commission should be granted. We therefore framed a scheme for the raising of a regiment to be officered by selected Indian gentlemen who would generally have received a military education in the Cadet Corps. Our proposal was that the regiment should begin with a skeleton of a few British officers to give it a start; and young Indian officers should be granted to it in the ordinary way, with bona fide commissions, who would rise in due course of promotion; while the British skeleton will gradually disappear and an Indian officer will eventually obtain



command of the regiment which would be in the course of 20 years or so. The scheme was sent Home and it was my earnest hope that it would receive official sanction before I left India. I am sorry to say I do not know what has happened to it since then. I feel, however, that it would be unfair to the Government of India not to take this opportunity of saying that as far as they were concerned, the necessity for the commission was recognised and the difficulty was dealt with. The opposition to our proposal was at Home!"

This last sentence illustrates the spirit in which the India Council deals with Indian aspirations. Fortunately, however, a beginning has been made by His Majesty nominating two or three Indian noblemen only recently and it remains for the Indian National Congress to bring to bear on His Majesty's Government the weight of the unanimous and earnest wish of the Indian people for a satisfactory solution of this important question.

Before I conclude, I desire to refer, however briefly, to the troubles and misfortunes that the Muslim world outside India has endured during the past few years. The period has been fraught with fateful changes in the recent history of Islam, changes materially affecting the importance of Muslim countries as independent countries which stirred Muslim feelings throughout the world to a degree seldom witnessed before. The Mussalmans who have seen the subversion of the Ottoman power in Europe, and the strangling of Persia, cannot find the same comfort as before, in their past achievements or present temporal power, when they have to think of the future of Islam. The progress of the unfortunate Balkan war was anxiously watched by Mussalmans of India, its disastrous results caused the greatest concern and disappointment, the dismemberment of Turkey by depriving her of her European Provinces evoked wide-spread regret, in which non-Muslims also shared, and the fate of Muslim States and their treatment by Europe made the deepest and most painful impression.

I do not consider it necessary to go at any length into the subject as abler men have fully dealt with it on other occasions. I trust that it will not be construed as a desire

on my part to underrate in any way the supreme importance which the question has in the eyes of the Muslims. European critics in estimating the effect of the Turkish reverse in the Balkans on the Muslim world have generally failed to take into account the Muslim opinion itself. But M. Mijatovich who has represented Serbia both at Constantinople and at the Court of St. James is very conciliatory when he says that political interest made us, the Balkan nations, paint the Turks as cruel Asiatic tyrants incapable of European civilisation. An impartial history would prove that the Turks are rather Europeans than Asiatics, and that they are not cruel tyrants, but a nation loving justice and fairness and possessing qualities and virtues which deserve to be acknowledged and respected. The martial era of the Turkish history having been, not ingloriously, closed, historical Providence seems to have in store a high mission for the Turks.

The defeat of Turkey, while it has caused intense grief and depression to the Islamic world, has also brought Muslims closer together in a way that nothing else was capable of doing. The worst adversity has its lessons to teach him who has a mind to profit by it. The Mussalmans have realised the full import of the grave crisis in their history, which has roused in them a feeling of brotherhood. They never before felt the strength of Islam a unifying force so keenly as they do at present. They had great faith in the essential beneficence of modern civilisation. But it is greatly to be deplored that faith has been rudely shaken; and they rightly feel that their future lies in their own hands. I look upon the desire for unity and self-reliance manifested by my co-religionists as an awakening pregnant with great possibilities for the future.

The decade that is closing with the current years is a momentous period in the history of our country, a period of stress and storm such as marks great upheavals in the march of humanity. In fact, the Indian unrest from which, thanks alike to the good sense of the people and to British statesmanship, we have safely emerged, was part of the prodigious wave of awakening and unrest that swept over the whole of Asia during all this period. You are aware, gentleman, that this period was ushered in, roughly speaking

by the victory of Japan over Russia, and it may be said to have ended with the Balkan War and its disastrous results to Turkey. In India, Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty which at the beginning raised great hopes in the minds of the people, constituted but the lull that usually precedes the storm. Throughout the exceedingly difficult and anxious years that followed, the ship of Indian administration was steered by the capable hands of two British statesmen who, assisted by the eye of sympathy lent to them by His Imperial Majesty, diagnosed the disease in our administration and applied the remedy. Their names will stand out prominently in the pages of Indian history in relation to this period. A wider field has been opened for the satisfaction of our aspirations by associating the people in the Government of the country. The reforms that have been introduced are far-reaching in their character and are necessary steps for giving the people a much larger share in the administration of their country. Lord Minto, in fact, interpreted the reforms in this way. If I remember right, in a memorable speech he made in London soon after his return from India, and added, in effect, that it would be unwise to withhold, for long, fiscal autonomy from India. These reforms depend for their success on the unity and solidarity of the Indian people among themselves and their hearty co-operation with the Rulers. Gentlemen, it was my privilege in 1903, addressing the Congress at Madras, as Chairman of the Reception Committee, to point to the harmony that subsisted, so far that Presidency was concerned, between the Hindu and the Muhammadan communities. Now, as your President, I am exceedingly happy to bear testimony to the important fact of the misunderstanding and distrust that divided the two communities in other parts of the country, having become almost a thing of the past, as shown by the trend of responsible public opinion among my co-religionists during the past few months and by their unusually large attendance within this hall. "If you want progress, be at peace with all," was said by one of our wisest men, the celebrated poet and philosopher, Hafiz. Muhammadanism, rightly understood, has no antipathy to any other religion. It is based on the widest conception of liberalism and democracy. A policy of

narrow aloofness or intolerant hostility is alien to the spirit of my religion. Gentlemen, the times are with us. Let us Hindus, and Mussalmans, Parsis and Christians, all join hands in brotherly co-operation and press forward with confidence and faith in the work that lies before us. I have already dealt with the advance that is being made by my co-religionists towards a rapprochement. May I now earnestly request my Hindu brethren to embrace this opportunity, to step forward and to clasp the extended hand in a spirit of earnestness, of good-will and of appreciation? I have many friends among you. I know that you have been anxious to join hands with your Mussulman brethren. The time is riper now for a clear understanding than it has been for years past. Concessions there must be, and sacrifices you cannot avoid. When harmony has to be restored and joint work has to be done, we must ignore trifles which actuate small minds, and concentrate our activities upon the larger work of consolidation.

Under the suzerainty of the most powerful and progressive of modern nations, our goal should be the attainment of autonomous Government in India, as indicated in the memorable Delhi Despatch of our beloved Viceroy; and although it may not be within the reach of the generation I have now the privilege of addressing, still it should be the constant endeavour of all us to secure it for posterity. Only by such endeavour shall we show that we have really profited by our contact with the British nation, its literature and civilisation, and that we are true to the traditions in which we have been nurtured. Let us strive for unity amongst us, for the advancement of the nation, and for bringing the forces of progress and of solidarity into line with our achievements in the past and of our expectations for the future. If these sentiments animate us, we must not lose a moment to take it at the flood the tide of national unity which has in-flowed in this, our Motherland. That tide, by God's grace, will surely sweep away in its majestic onward course the unnatural and artificial barriers of race, colour and religion.

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## HAKIM AJMAL KHAN, 1921.

Brother and Sister Delegates,—Ladies and Gentleman :—  
For the first time in the history of the Indian National Congress we are assembling under circumstances when, as a result of the latest measures of the British Government in India, our duly elected President is not amongst us. It is a matter of deepest regret to all of us that Mr. C. R. Das is not with us to guide our deliberation to-day. It is superfluous for me to enumerate the numerous national services of that great patriot from Bengal or refer to the prominent place he occupies in the political and social life of our country, when the nation has itself unequivocally said in what esteem it holds him by conferring on him the greatest honour in its power. But while we regret his absence on that account, it should be a matter of deepest satisfaction to us all, both because the man whom the nation had chosen as its chief representative has, by his undaunted courage, splendid self-sacrifice and spirit of cheerful suffering, proved himself worthy of the great honour conferred on him and because his arrest brings us a stage nearer to our success. Mr. C. R. Das has done greater service to his country by his arrest than he would probably have done by presiding over our deliberations to-day. His arrest has infused greater spirit and determination into the hearts of national workers and galvanised the entire country to greater activities and sacrifices.

I, however, realise my own inability to fill the place of Mr. C. R. Das, and while thanking you for the great trust you have reposed in me by electing me to act for him, I hope and trust that I will prove myself worthy of the great honour you have conferred on me not only in this Pandal but when the time comes for me to make, for my country and my God, the sacrifice that it has been the good fortune of many of our noble brethren to make.

Brother and Sister Delegates, I am not going to deliver a lengthy speech, first because the time at my disposal is short and in the second place I feel that the time for long speeches is gone. We all are called upon to solve the most serious problem in the history of our country and the present is the time for decision and action. It will take a long time to enter upon a detailed survey of the progress of the non-co-operation movement since the last Session of the Indian National Congress. I will only briefly touch on the advance the country has made since the inauguration of non-violent non-co-operation. The spirit of non-co-operation pervades throughout the country and there is no true Indian heart even in the remotest corner of this great country which is not filled with the spirit of cheerful suffering and sacrifice to attain Swaraj and see the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs redressed. It has received the highest tribute that a nation could pay to another from our sister nations across the Indian Ocean. Our Egyptian brethren have adopted it to fight their own political battle. It should be a matter of pride to all of us that India is showing the way to other sister countries. Non-violent non-co-operation has ceased to be an Indian movement. It is fast becoming an Asiatic movement and the day is not distant when the conscience of the world will adopt non-violent non-co-operation movement in India after witnessing the cheerful spirit with which our workers have made and are making willing sacrifices for the cause of their country and are going to jail in ever increasing numbers with a smile on their lips? What is still more is that not even this intense repression has provoked violence. It has only redoubled the national determination. Every successive fit of repression on the part of the Government whether it was in connection with the confiscation of the Fatwa of Jamiat-ul-Ulema, the famous Karachi Trial or the wholesale applications of the Seditious Meetings Act, the Criminal Law Amendment Act or Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code by means of which the right of association and peaceful activities of the volunteer organisation, together with other elementary right of citizenship were suppressed had had but one effect, *viz.*, the determination on the part of the people to continue the national activities and persist in their demand.

A ceaseless pilgrimage to the jail is kept up in vindication of the primary rights of citizenship in all the northern parts of India as also in Maharashtra and Andhra. The nation to-day realize the grimness and gravity of the great struggle it is engaged in and is behaving with the cool determination worthy of heroes fighting for a noble cause.

Nor is the time at which we are waging this noble struggle inopportune. Not only the conscience of Asia and Africa is awake and active; and there are signs, feeble no doubt, yet full of hope and promise, that the conscience of Europe too is at last rousing itself from its long slumber.

I must add one word about the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. We have no quarrel with His Royal Highness; but we do not want a bankrupt Government to re-establish its fallen political credit by making a capital out of His Royal Highness's visit. Nor is the country in a mood to accord the Prince a cordial welcome so long as the two sores of the Khilafat and the Punjab are still running and Swaraj is still maintained. We therefore resolved simply to refrain from taking part in the welcome to His Royal Highness. And if there have been any regrettable incidents with consequent bitterness of spirit, the responsibility for them lies entirely at the doors of the Government that betrayed such a lamentable lack of sense and judgment and acted in a manner utterly unjustifiable.

Our critics say that the non-co-operation movement has failed and in support of that statement point to the Government educational institutions, the ranks of the title holders, the members of the new Legislative Councils such the Bars of the various High Courts. My answer to that if answer be still needed after what I have just said, is that as far as the Government Educational Institutions are concerned, I would invite the attention of our critics to what the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University had to say on the effect of the non-co-operation movement. That result was achieved in spite of the fact that we had not made provision for a sufficient number of national colleges and national schools and for the students who left their institutions. As to the title-holders and members of the Legislative Councils—the classes which would naturally not be the first in respond to such an

appeal—what is their position? Where is their prestige to-day? It has fallen lower than Czarist ruble. The Government may still manufacture and place them in the market but the public simply does not care for them and after all it is the public alone that can give them the position of trust and honour that is claimed for them. As to the lawyer, it is true that with some noble exceptions they have not as a class, responded to our appeal or they ought to have done. But as we develop our Panchayat system a work to which we have not been able to devote such of our time and energy, the legal practitioners would soon fall in with public opinion. The co-operation of Government servants is slightly different, and comparing the number of resignation offered last month with the average for the previous months, we have no reason to feel dissatisfied with the progress that non-co-operation is making in that direction, specially in the increased number of resignation is unquestionably the result of the policy of intensive repression adopted by the Government.

True, there are some of our Moderate brothers with genuine love of our common country in their hearts who for want of true appreciation of the real nature of the struggle we are engaged in and the issues that it involves have not yet taken their proper place in the national ranks. But I feel sure that if the fire of patriotism is still alive in their hearts, and I feel confident that it will not die, they will soon realize their mistake and will be found taking the place of their brothers whose names are on the national Roll of Honour.

I cannot close without referring to the tragic events that are daily taking place in Malabar and the prolonged agonies of our unfortunate Moplah brethren. And here I must make it quite clear that this question has two aspects. One with reference to the Government in the country and the other with reference to the treatment by the Moplahs of their Hindu Brethren. As to the first, judging from the evidence before the public, one cannot help coming to the conclusion that the responsibility provoking this disturbances rests entirely on the shoulder of the Government. While as to the method adopted in suppressing these there will be no thinking person in the country who will not condemn them. All of us who have had the experience of Amritsar know the



horrible nature of this "pacification." It was only accidentally that the terrible train-tragedy was revealed in the public the other day. But how many other tragedies there are that have not come to light?

As to our Hindu brethren who have been forcibly converted or otherwise suffered at the hands of some of the Moplahs, I fully sympathise with them and there will be no Muslim worthy of the name who will not condemn this entirely un-Islamic act in the strongest possible terms. I feel sure that these stray incidents are the acts of a few misguided individuals and that the rest of the Moplahs are as ready and strong in condemning them as any of us here. Still I should not like the fair name of Islam to be tarnished in the slightest degree and I sincerely regret these deplorable incidents.

Ladies and gentlemen, our country is experiencing terrible convulsions, but it requires no prophet to foretell that these are the birth-pangs of young India that will revive the glorious traditions of our ancient country and take the proud place by the nations of the world. (Loud applause).

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## MAULANA MOHAMMAD ALI, 1923

Friends and fellow-workers:—

It has been the custom for every occupant of the Presidential chair of the Indian National Congress to thank the delegates that have conferred on him the highest honour it is in the power of the Indian nation to confer on an Indian. It has also been customary for him to disclaim that his merits deserved such signal honour and to declare his unfitness to rank with those that have previously occupied the Presidential chair. I have no doubt that the innate modesty of my predecessors infused into these disclaimers and declarations a sincerity that saved them from the banality of mere conventions. But it is no such modesty that makes me further state them by repetition. When two years ago just on the eve of my imprisonment, a few of the provinces had honoured me also with their nominations. I was still in a position to withdraw my name and to give at least partial expression to the shock of surprise I felt on that occasion. This time, however, fate had taken the matter almost entirely out of my hands; for, soon after I was discharged from prison, I received from the Reception Committee here the telegraphic message that in a few days it would meet to put the seal of its agreement on the choice of the Provincial Congress Committees.

Believe me, if the circumstances that had led to the Special Session at Delhi, and, still more, if that session itself had not revealed to me conditions that made the withdrawal of my name something in the nature of desertion, I would have withdrawn it even at that late stage. I consider it a presumption to preside here, and one reason for my reluctance and hesitation must be obvious to all. It must be remembered that my association with the Indian National Congress is of very recent date. It was only in 1919 that for the first time I attended the Congress as a delegate, and then, too, my participation was not in the ordinary course.

As some of you may remember, my brother and I had just been released from confinement as state prisoners in the Betul gaol in which our internment during the last four years of the war had culminated. We had, of course, proceeded straight to the Congress that had already commenced its session in martyred Amritsar, and since we could not have been elected as delegates in the usual way, the good people of Amritsar had forthwith adopted us their own. The Nagpur Session that was held in the following year was the first, and as it happened, also the only one previous to this which my brother and I attended as delegates elected in the ordinary course. Those who had hitherto occupied the Presidential chairs had been veterans that had grown grey in the service of the Congress. Can it, therefore, be merely conventional if one who is after all among the babes and sucklings of the Congress thanks you for such an unusual mark for your favour?

The only consideration which could justify this favour was that, although my association with the Congress was recent, it was coupled with my association with one of the very greatest, if also one of the latest Congress-men, for whom all eyes search in vain in this Pandal to-day. Ever since I first attended a session of the Congress as a delegate in 1919, he had been the one dominating personality. More than ever we need our great chief, Mahatma Gandhi, to-day; and if God that willed that in his place one of his humblest followers, though not the least loving among them, should assist you in your deliberations, I can only feel what the Arab poet felt when he wistfully wrote:

"The death of great ones made us great!"

But although the man who was most responsible for Mahatma Gandhi's incarceration hoped that by "burying him alive" as he called it he would kill the spirit that the Mahatma had infused into the nation, I feel certain that it lives just as surely as the Mahatma lives himself. Relying on God's assistance, and on your own kind indulgence, which

I think, I may with confidence bespeak, I invoke that spirit today in the hope that with its aid I may prove not altogether unworthy of the high office to which your suffrage has all too generously called me.

Friends, the only one who can lead you is the one who had led you at Amritsar, at Calcutta, at Nagpur and at Ahmedabad. though each session of the Congress had its own elected President. Our generalissimo is to-day a prisoner of war in the hands of the enemy, and none can fill the void that his absence from our midst has caused. As for myself I am but a comrade whom your loving kindness has called out from the ranks, and I plead for its continuance not only during the discussions of this session, but also throughout the year in which I am required by your constitution to assist you as your President.

On one point, however, you too are entitled to an assurance from me, and I offer it to you without hesitation. I have been a fighter all my life, and, of course, I have been in the habit of throwing all the vehemence of an impulsive and impetuous nature into my fights. But your choice of me as your President has robbed me of my freedom, and to regain that freedom, if for nothing else, I would have willingly foregone the great privilege of presiding on this occasion. However, in the cast you have assigned to me, the unfamiliar role of the peace-maker, and even a fighter like me has to confess that if anything is better than a fight it is peace — I have, therefore, deprived myself of the opportunity to fight in order to help the cause of peace and unity and I do not regret the surrender. As your President, I am here to serve you to the best of my power, and not in the capacity of a slave-driver, and if, in following the convention of political societies like yours, I have to inaugurate this session with an address, it is essentially in the spirit of a servant of yours that I do so, and not as a dictator. I am here to assist you to form judgments on the various issues that may come up for your decision; and, so far as it lies in the power of a fellow-worker and comrade of yours, I hope to help you to form only sound judgments, and to form them without waste of time, temper and energy. But these judgments must be yours, not mine; or, if you will, ours collectively in the

truest sense. I have referred to the Mahatma's dominating personality, and we must admit how difficult it was to shake off his spell even for those rare individuals that desired to do so. I feel certain that Mahatma Gandhi neither asked nor wanted anyone to surrender his judgment to him; and I have been told that just before his arrest he regretfully realised that quite a number of his followers and admirers, who had readily, and in all sincerity, signified their agreement with him, had failed to realize that they were offering their allegiance only to the man and were not accepting his measures as well on the strength of their own clear conviction. It will be an impertinence for me even to disclaim any such influence as the Mahatma undoubtedly exercised over the people, and I am anxious that every vote cast on any side should be the result of the voter's own deliberate judgment, carrying with it the fullest individual responsibility. As for myself, if I kept back from you my own view of any matter of vital importance, merely for fear that it might not be acceptable to you, I shall certainly not be serving you truly. For another thing it would not be consistent with true democracy. But we shall only be making a mockery of democracy if freedom was denied to the delegates of the Congress merely to please its President, or silence was imposed on the many just to secure the goodwill of the few.

Nevertheless, we have to understand that the country did not elect six thousand delegates, and we have not travelled to Cocanada from every corner of it as to division lobbies, merely to cast our votes and to register our individual judgments already formed before we set out on our journey. What good could we do to ourselves and to others if, like Omar, the Tent-Maker Poet of Persia, we "evermore came out by the same door wherein we went"? If we do not wish to turn our journey into utter futility and so much labour lost, the opinions we had formed, individually or in groups, before we started, must be tested here by comparison with the opinions of our fellow-delegates and influenced by them. And it is no shame, but on the contrary very often much to our credit, if we change our views in deference to the judgments of others whom we credit with greater sagacity or

experience, or to the cumulative weight of the judgment of a large majority of people, although they be in no way superior to us as individuals, even though at the time itself we are not fully convinced that our own views are wrong. I am second to no man in my respect for deeply cherished convictions. But convictions are not on every occasion to be treated as matters of conscience, and I have the support here of Cromwell, one of the most conscientious statesmen known to history, who used to implore his fellow-workers to remember that it was possible they might be mistaken.

Every delegate has the right to give expression to his views with perfect freedom, and to do so on as many questions as he likes. He has also the right to move as many resolutions as he pleases, to move amendments to as many resolutions proposed by others as he thinks fit; and to divide the house as frequently as he chooses. But no real work is possible if such rights are exercised without proper consideration for the opinion and convenience of others, and particularly without regard for the best interests of a distressed and distracted nation. Our great chief had often to deplore that the enthusiasm of our people in their assemblages lacked self-restraint and discipline and, in truth, it was their innate peace-loving nature and their good humour that so often proved their saving grace. Self-restraint and discipline can be taught to the masses only by such leaders as the Congress delegates, and the self-restraint and discipline of the delegates themselves is the best guarantee of the self-restraint and discipline of the masses. Above all, I trust that in giving expression to our views, no matter how strong, we shall avoid such partisanship as feeds on malice and revels in violent recriminations. Our great chief is noted throughout the world for his gospel of Non-Violence, and it would be a sad commentary on our allegiance to one who would not tolerate violence in thought or word towards an enemy if we excluded from our boaster Non-Violence our best friends. I would not for the world change popular enthusiasm into quietism or indifference. We need discipline, not death. We must have necessary steam to propel the national machinery; but it must be under control. Closely allied to this is the principle of compromise and accommoda-

tion. Ours is nothing if not a war of principles and we can not afford to forsake principle; even for the sake of peace. But short of that we are being called upon by the state of our nation to-day to make every sacrifice in order to accommodate those who are as staunch nationalists as ourselves, but who do not always see eye to eye with us. It is our particular distinction that our great chief has spiritualized politics and we can no longer be content with politics that is completely divorced from ethics. But in politics we may not always be able to secure the best. Life is one long second best, and there should be bar against the second best if, by being content with it for the time being, we can carry large sections of the nation with us on the road to victory. Above all, let us not think of winning party victories when we have still to win the great victory of freedom against slavery, and of justice against a whole nation's wrongs. Forgive me, friends, for this homiletic preface, but I think I owed it to you as well as to myself. And now let us begin.

I have referred to the fact that my association with the Congress is of very recent date; but this admission is not merely personal. It involves the political history of the community to which I belong, and if I give a brief outline of it to you, it is only for the purpose of elucidating a problem which is the most vital of all the problems we have to solve to-day. When, in 1885, some Indian leaders, assisted by their British sympathisers, founded the Indian National Congress, the Musalmans of India did not participate in the movement except in a few individual cases. If their lack of western education made them unfit to take part in a movement essentially that of the classes educated according to western nations, their political temper made them an element that was not unlikely to prove dangerous to any political movement. They had already lost the rule of India, but the tradition of that rule had survived. This had increased the aversion they had always felt for the new type of education. The rule of India had finally passed from Muslim into English hands by slow and hardly perceptible degrees in the hundred years that intervened between the Battle of Plassey and the Indian Mutiny, but the Musalmans had not ceased to regard the new rulers of India as something very inferior to them-

selves in civilisation and culture. This storm of ill-will and disdain had been gathering force for a whole country, and was at last precipitated in 1857. The Mutiny began near Calcutta as an affair of the Indian army, but in the storm-centre of Delhi and of my own province, where it had to be fought out if English rule was to continue in India, it soon attracted to itself many forms of discontent, and religion was inextricably mixed up with politics. Although so many Musalmans had, at enormous risk to themselves, assisted the British at a time when hardly anyone could have predicted their eventual success with any degree of assurance, it was the Muslim aristocracy in those parts that suffered most from terrible aftermath of the Mutiny. In fact, in its permanent results, even more than in some of its terrors, it could, without any great exaggeration be compared to the social upheaval that the French Revolution meant to the old nobility of France. The remnants of Muslim aristocracy, deprived of all influence and many of its possessions, certainly did not expect the return of Muslim rule. Nevertheless, a whole generation of Musalmans kept sullenly aloof from all contact with the culture of the new rulers of India which in their heart of hearts they still despised. They were in no mood to take advantage of the education provided by the Universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, founded in the very year in which the Mutiny convulsed the regions which formed the political centre of Muslim India. It was a natural consequence of this attitude of the Musalmans who sulked in their tents that when, nearly thirty years later, a new generation of Indians, who owed their education to the English, inaugurated a political movement on western lines, Indian Musalmans should be unfit by lack of such education to participate in that movement. Nevertheless, the Congress which called itself "Indian" and "National" felt the need of Muslim participation, for it could not justify its title without it.

Efforts were therefore made early enough to enlist Musalmans as delegates. But at this juncture Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the great pioneer of western education among Musalmans, stepped into the political arena, and in two historic speeches, one delivered at Lucknow on the 28th Decem-



ber, 1887, and the other at Meerut on the 16th March, 1888, decisively checked whatever signs the Musalmans had shown of political activity in support of the Congress movement. It is by no means a difficult task to criticise those speeches, for they contained many fallacies to which no politically-minded Musalman could subscribe to-day. But I am not one of those who declare merely on the strength of some ill-advised expressions characteristic of so militant a controversialist as Syed Ahmad Khan, that he was opposed to the co-operation of Hindus and Musalmans.

Although his own public career after retirement from Public Service was identified with a movement for the uplift of his own community, he was a good Indian as well as a good Muslim, and many of his speeches prove him to have been an ardent patriot inspired with the love of Indian unity. And those who knew him personally can testify to the staunchness of his friendship with many Hindus, which could not have survived the narrow prejudices of which he has sometimes been accused.

No more true is the charge that he was opposed to Muslim participation in politics for all time. Whatever arguments he may have used in the two political utterances to which I have referred, to convince his Muslim hearers there were two arguments, and two only, that obviously convinced Syed Ahmad Khan himself of the undesirability of Muslim participation in the Congress at the time. He realised to the full that nothing would suit the temper of the Musalmans of his day better than the vocation of the critics of their British supplanters in the governance of India; and he also realised that such a pursuit would be as dangerous to the continuance and progress of a peaceful political movement like the Congress as it was easy. This was the first argument that impelled Syed Ahmad Khan to keep his community under restraint in politics. The second argument was no less potent. Musalmans must educate themselves if they desired the uplift of their community, and yet it was no easy task to reconcile Musalmans to western education even in an institution of their own which, unlike Government colleges and schools, would not divorce religions from secular learning. The easy pursuit of a policy in which the Muslims could act as destruc-

tive critics of the hated infidel Government was sure to offer superior attractions to the dull and drab constructive programme of the educationist, and he therefore set himself to oppose all diversion of Muslim activities into the more attractive, but for the time being less useful, political channel. Reviewing the actions of a bygone generation to-day, when it is easier to be wise after the event, I must confess I still think the attitude of Syed Ahmad Khan was eminently wise, and much as I wish that some things which he had said should have been left unsaid, I am constrained to admit that no well-wisher of Musalmans, nor of India as a whole, could have followed a very different course in leading the Musalmans.

But it is remembered that the man who enunciated this policy was not at the time a **Persona Grata** to the major portion of the community which he sought to lead. He was hated as a heretic because of the heterodoxy of his aggressive rationalism in interpreting the Holy Qurau, and his militant opposition to popular superstitions believed in by the bulk of the orthodox and to shackling customs consecrated by time, though wholly unauthorised by Islam. He was abused and vilified by hundreds of thousands of his co-religionists, and for long the college that he had founded at Aligarh was the **Bete Noire** of the pious Muslims. And yet the entire community followed his political lead without a murmur. Neither fallacious argument nor even political claptrap could have possessed such potency, and it is my firm belief that his advocacy succeeded mainly because of the soundness of the policy advocated.

For two decades thereafter the Musalmans had hardly any politics or any political institution worth the name. On important occasions when Syed Ahmad Khan, and of course, his British supporters, thought that any demand of the Congress if satisfied would not be productive of good for the Musalmans, he would call together a few of his friends, mostly Trustees of the Aligarh College, who used to form a society bearing some such name as the "Muslim Defence Association," and a resolution of this body would be published in the **Pioneer** and in Syed Ahmad Khan's own local weekly newspaper in due course. That was all that the Musalmans would do in those days in the field of politics.

I am far from denying that Syed Ahmad Khan knew perfectly well that his policy was more than acceptable to his official supporters, who would have in all likelihood put every possible obstruction in the way of his college and his Educational Conference if he had followed another less acceptable to them. But a close study of his character leads me to declare that he was far from possessing the sycophancy with which some of his political critics have credited him. Indeed, even the opportunism of which his policy savoured could not have been entirely palatable to a nature so independent as his. In the year 1907, soon after the commencement of a new era in Muslim politics inaugurated by the foundation of the Muslim League, to which I shall presently refer, there occurred a strike of the students of Syed Ahmad Khan's College at Aligarh owing to the support given against them by their own English Principal and Professors to the police that had picked up a quarrel with one of them. Just about that time fell the anniversary of Syed Ahmad Khan's death celebrated annually in the College as the "Founder's Day." For that occasion I had written in Urdu an Ode addressed to the late Founder of my college and referring to this unmistakable indication of the students' self-respect and of their willingness to make the necessary self-sacrifice demanded by the haughty disdain of the foreigner, I had said :—

It is you that had taught the community all this "mis-chief," if we are its culmination, you are its commencement.

That I am not alone in this estimate of Syed Ahmad Khan's character and policy will be proved by an interesting conversation that I shall relate. Once when my brother was still in the Public Service, an old English official asked him whom he thought was the greatest rebel in India against British rule. And, correcting my brother's answer, that experienced official had declared that it was no other than Syed Ahmad Khan, loyalist of loyalists! When my brother protested against this astonishing judgment, he said :—

"Do you think young Mussalmans who are being taught at Aligarh almost as well as our own boys at Harrow and Winchester, who live their lives and can beat them at their own games, would obsequiously serve them when they come out as Indian Civilians or members of such other superior

services? No, Mr. Shaukat Ali, the days of British rule in India are numbered, and it is your loyal Syed Ahmad Khan that is the arch-rebel to-day!"

Like only too many of us, this British official too had failed to realise the paralysing effect of the education given in the colleges and schools established or favoured by this foreign Government, and had only foreseen the dissatisfaction and discontent that it must inevitably produce. With a Muslim University, chartered, aided and controlled by Government still flourishing at Aligarh, so far as the number of the teachers and the taught and a University Chest filled with the contributions of the rich are concerned, though robbed of all generous ideals and national and communal ambitions, and existing side by side with another poor in everything save its ideals and its dreams, into which my old college had seemed to have transformed itself three years ago, I cannot boast that the "arch rebel" of Aligarh has altogether succeeded in his "rebellious" endeavour. But it is my firm conviction that he had always aimed and intended to produce staunch Muslims and patriotic Indians even if he could not perhaps contemplate a near enough future for Indian in which his "young barbarians all that play" could be other than "loyal British subject."

Nearly thirty years after the foundation of the Universities in the three Presidency towns of India—a period which corresponds with the growth of a new generation—the Congress had inevitably come into existence. It was no easy task that Syed Ahmad Khan had accomplished in founding an Anglo-Oriental College of his own community within two decades of the Indian Mutiny in the very regions which had formed the storm-centre in 1857. In obedience as it were, to a law of nature, once more nearly thirty years after the foundation of this college, there came into being a political institution of the Musalmans who had not availed themselves of the educational facilities provided by the State Universities, and could not consequently share in the political awakening which those Universities had indirectly brought about. And it is not without significance that fairly prominent among the founders of the Muslim League at Dacca at the end of 1906 were some alumni of Syed Ahmad Khan's own College.

This inaugurated a new era in the political life of the Indian Mussalmans. Some months previously a Muslim deputation had waited at Simla on the Viceroy, Lord Minto, to place before him and his Government a statement of the Muslim demands in connection with the Minto-Morley Reforms then foreshadowed. To follow the fashion of British journalists during the war, "there is no harm now in saying" that the deputation was a "command" performance! It was clear that Government could no longer resist the demands of educated Indians, and, as usual, it was about to dole out to them a morsel that would keep them gagged for some years. Hitherto the Musalmans had acted very much like the Irish prisoner in the dock who, in reply to the judge's inquiry whether he had any counsel to represent him in the trial, had frankly replied that he had certainly not engaged counsel, but that he had "friend in the jury"! But now the Muslims "friends in the jury" had themselves privately urged that the accused should engage duly qualified counsel like all others. From whatever source the inspiration may have come, there is no doubt that the Muslim cause was this time properly advocated. In the common territorial electorates the Musalmans had certainly not succeeded in securing anything like adequate or real representation, and those who denounced and deplored the creation of separate electorates for which the Musalmans had pleaded should have remembered that separate electorates were the consequence, and not the cause, of the separation between Musalmans and their more numerous Hindu brethren.

But little could the official supporters of the Muslim community have suspected at the time that, paradoxical as it may seem, the creation of separate electorates was hastening the advent of Hindu-Muslim unity. For the first times a real franchise, however restricted, was being offered to the Indians and if Hindus and Musalmans remained just as divided as they had hitherto been since the commencement of British rule, and often hostile to one another, mixed electorates would have provided the best battle-ground for inter-communal strifes, and would have still further widened the gulf separating the two communities. Each candidate for election would have appealed to his own community for votes, and would

have based his claims for preference on the intensity of his ill-will towards the rival community, however disguised this may have been under some such formula as "the defence of his community's interests." Bad as this would have been, the results of an election in which the two communities were not equally matched would have been even worse, for the community that failed to get its representatives elected would have inevitably borne a yet deeper grudge against its successful rival. Divided as the two communities were, there was no chance for any political principles coming into prominence during the elections. The creation of separate electorates did a great deal to put a stop to this inter communal warfare, though I am far from oblivious of the fact that when inter-communal jealousies are acute, the men that are more likely to be returned even from communal electorates are just those who are noted for their ill-will towards the rival community.

In the controversy that raged round the representation of Musalmans as a community I had taken my full share; but no sooner the Muslim claim had been recognised in practice in the elections to the enlarged councils of 1910, I decided to launch a weekly journal of my own from the seat of the Government of India in order to assist my community in taking its proper share in the political life of the country. I was particularly anxious to help it to understand that, while endeavouring to satisfy the pressing needs of the present, which would inevitably bring it now and then into conflict with other elements in the body-politic, it should never lose sight of the prospects of the future when ultimately all communal interests had to be adjusted so as to harmonise with the paramount interests of India.

I had long been convinced that here in this country of hundreds of millions of human beings, intensely attached to religion, and yet infinitely split up into communities, sect and denominations, Providence had created for us the mission of solving a unique problem and working out a new synthesis, which was nothing less than a Federation of Faiths! As early as in 1904, when I had been only two years in India after my return from Oxford, I had given to this idea a clear, if still somewhat hesitating expression in an address delivered at Ahmedabad on "Proposed Mahomedan University," "Un-

less some new force,'—this is what I had said on that occasion—unless some new force, **other than the misleading unity of opposition** unites this vast continent of India, it will either remain a geographical misnomer, or what I think it will ultimately do, become a Federation of Religions." I had noted the strength of the centrifugal force of Indian communities; and yet hope and faith and the deep yearning for freedom had even then made me realise the latent centripetal force of Indian unity. The lines of cleavage were too deeply marked to permit a unity other than federal; and yet, as I had observed in the address from which I have already quoted, the cleavage was not territorial or racial in character, but religious. For more than twenty years I have dreamed the dream of a federation grander nobler and infinitely more spiritual than the United States of America, and to-day when many a political Cassandra prophesies a return to the bad old days of Hindu-Muslim dissensions, I still dream that old dream of "united **Faiths** of India." It was in order to translate this dream into reality that I had launched my weekly newspaper, and significantly called it "**The Comrade**"—comrade of all and partisan of none.

Friends, is it so entirely out of place if I quote a little from the first words that I had contributed to the first issue of the **Comrade**? In view of the political controversy that had been raging in India. I naturally shrank from relating my dream when making my **Debut** before a sceptical matter-of-fact world. And yet the dream was all the time there for those who did not despise dreams.

"We have no faith (I wrote on the 14th January, 1911) in the cry that India is united. If India was united where was the need of dragging the venerable president of this year's Congress from a distant home. The bare imagination of a feast will not dull the edge of hunger. We have less faith still in the sanctimoniousness that transmutes in its subtle alchemy a rapacious monopoly into fervent patriotism

Even as poor birds deceiv'd with painted grapes  
Do surfeit by the eye, and pine the maw'  
those of us who cannot distinguish true gold from the

glitter of spurious coins, will one day surfeit by the ear and pine the heart. But the person we love best, fear the most, and trust the least is the impatient idealist. Goethe said of Byron that he was prodigious poet, but that when he reflected he was a child. Well, we think no better and no worse of the man who combines great ideals and a greater impatience. So many efforts, well meaning as well as ill-begotten, have failed in bringing unity to this distracted land, that we cannot spare even cheap and scentless flowers of sentiment for the grave of another ill judged endeavour. We shall not make the mistake of gumming together pieces of broken glass, and then cry over the unsuccessful result, or blame the refractory material. In other words we shall endeavour to face the situation boldly, and respect facts, howsoever ugly and ill-favoured. It is poor statesmanship to slur over inconvenient realities, and not the least important success in achieving unity is the honest and frank recognition of deep-seated prejudices that hinder it and the yawning differences that divide.

But while providing for to day, we must not forget the morrow. It is our firm belief that if the Musalmans or the Hindus attempt to achieve in opposition to, or even without the cooperation of one another, they will not only fail, but fail ignominiously. But every step has to be taken with caution. Nothing in history, ancient or modern, provides a useful analogy to the condition of modern India. History never repeats itself. But it is still the best educative force for mankind, and it has its lessons for us also. The problems of India are almost international. But when the statesmen and philanthropists of Europe, with all its wars of interests and national jealousies, do not despair of abolishing war and placing Pax on the throne of Belona, shall we despair of Indian nationality? We may not create to-day the patriotic fervour and the fine national frenzy of Japan with its forty millions of homogeneous people. But a concordant like that of Canada is not beyond the bounds of practicability. It may not be a love-marriage, born of romance and poetry. BUT A MARRIAGE DE CONVENANCE, honourably contracted and honourably maintained, is not to be despised. Let us begin with honest prose and the Muses will not forbid the



banns. Even this is no easy task. But it is one worthy of the sons and daughters of India, and deserves their toil and self-sacrifice.

O ! Unity,

"Thou wilt come, join men, knit nation unto nation ;

"But not for us who watch to-day and burn.

"Thou wilt come, but after what long years trial,

"Weary watching, patient longing, dull denial !"

Friends, three years ago we were privileged to catch more than a fleeting glimpse of the unity of which I had dreamed, and if to-day we have to admit, as we must, that the dream has not been realised as fully as we wish, we shall have once more to examine the situation carefully and to face inconvenient facts with candour and with courage. I propose to do that presently, but not to break the thread of my narrative I revert to the situation as it existed at the time when I made my journalistic DEBUT.

As I had foreseen, the separate electorates returned both Hindus and Mussalmans who were not averse to combine in the various legislatures to support the popular cause. Nevertheless, inter-communal hostility did not altogether cease in the country. A new element was however, unexpectedly added to the situation by the aggression of Western nations against Muslim States and its effect on Muslim sentiment in India, and although there are not wanting to-day staunch non-Muslim Nationalists who look askance at Indian Muslim feeling with regard to Muslim affairs abroad, a little reflection would show that the new element to which I have referred, even while undoubtedly diverting the attention of Indian Musalmans to some extent from affairs at home, hastened Muslim disillusionment with regard to their traditional reliance on their foreign Government and thereby contributed greatly to Indian unity.

I had intended the COMRADE to be the organ that was to voice the sentiments I entertained regarding the need of an inter-communal federation for India. It was to prepare the Musalmans to make their proper contribution to territorial patriotism without abating one jot of the fervour of their extra-territorial sympathies which are as you must know, part of the quintessence of Islam. When I first

did not expect that any but a small fraction of my attention and energies would be attracted by Muslim politics outside the confines of my own country. It is true that affairs in Egypt did not present a very re-assuring appearance ; nor did the new Constitutions in Turkey and Persia receive, after an initial outburst of welcome, their full measure of sympathy which we in India felt to be due to such heroic and hazardous enterprises from England, the one European Power with which we had all along been exclusively concerned. The only other European Power on our political horizon had been Russia. So long as after the overthrow of France a hundred years previously she was the most considerable of the Powers on the continent of Europe, and had further aggravated that situation by aiming at being a yet greater Power on the continent of Asia, everyone in India had been sedulously taught by the masters of India's destinies to regard her as the enemy of mankind, and to believe that it was the sacred mission of England to thwart and defeat her. But the rapid rise of Japan and its signal success in defeating Russia in the Far East, while it encouraged other oriental nations to hold up their heads and to hope, so radically altered the position of Russia that from being an inveterate enemy she became a friend and in all but name an ally of England, even though it was her victorious adversary that had been, and still remained, the acknowledged and official ally of that nation. This speedily reacted on Eastern politics, not only in Persia, where Russia openly stood up as a high-handed dictator, and where it was soon to cause a hail-storm of ultimatums, but also in Turkey, where the rivalries of the Slav and the Teuton now reappeared with added vehemence in the form of a struggle between Entente and Alliance. Once more had the Near East become the storm-centre of European politics.

All this was no doubt disquieting enough to Indian Musalmans who had been brought up from their childhood to regard England as the friend and Russia as the enemy of the Muslim States. But the political controversies of Hindus and Musalmans appeared none the less to be their immediate concern in India. The passions that these inter-communal

differences had unfortunately aroused just a little previously had lent to them the semblance of acute inter-national conflict, while Turkey and Persia still seemed comparatively remote.

But things did not proceed precisely in the way in which I had so optimistically forecasted. The year 1911 proved a fateful year for Muslim States. The new Governments of Turkey, Persia and Morocco all began to meet with squalls in their initial voyage of reform and progress which soon developed into regular storms.

In India, too, the year proved more fateful for Musalmans than any one could have predicted. Just before the close of the year the King-Emperor made a portentous Announcement at Delhi where he had come ostensibly to announce in person in an "Imperial" Durbar only the event of his coronation that year. It was admittedly an "abrupt departure from the tradition of British Government and a complete dislocation of official habits." But this unusual procedure and the secrecy which had been maintained not only at the expense of India but also of that of the Local Governments, were justified on the ground that the Imperial Announcement was "one of the most weighty decisions ever taken since the establishment of the British Rule in India," and that the discussion of measures which were being taken in consequence of an agitation that indicated "bitterness of feeling", and was at the same time 'very widespread and unyielding", would have in its turn caused endless agitation. As we all know, the Announcement comprised a re-adjustment of territories upsetting Lord Curzon's vindictive Partition of Bengal and the creation of the new Province of Behar and Orissa after the re-union of Bengal, East and West. It also indirectly penalised Bengal by shifting the capital to Delhi. As I wrote in the COMRADE at the time, I was in favour of both these schemes, "taking each by it self as wholly unconnected schemes", and "irrespective of the time, place and procedure preferred by the Government of India for the Announcement" The Partition in the form then approved was due in 1905 and the transfer of the capital was needed in 1858. Lords Curzon and Middleton had sinned in a hurry, and it would have seemed that Lords Hardinge

and Crewe were repenting at leisure. But it was clear from the King-Emperor's Announcement as well as from the despatches of the Government of India and the Secretary of State, that "the key-stone of the whole project" was the "proposal to make Delhi the future capital of India"; that it was only "as a consequence of the transfer" that the Partition was modified; that the Bengalis were expected to be "reconciled to the change" of capital by "other features of the scheme which were specially designed to give satisfaction to Bengal sentiment"; and that the re-union of the two Bengals was no more than "the compensation which will be offered to Bengali sentiment" for "the objections to the transfer which are likely to be entertained in some quarters. There was not a word in the Government of India's Despatch about such things as the financial embarrassment of the administration in Eastern Bengal, the unsatisfactory results of yoking Assam with a part of Bengal, or the difficulties of communication between the Rajshahi Division and Dacca, all of which could have been utilised to justify the unsettlement of a "settled fact". The Partition of 1905 was indeed acknowledged in that Despatch to have fulfilled "two of the chief purposes which its authors had in view" "It relieved," so ran the Despatch, "the over-burdened administration of Bengal, and it gave the Mahomedan population of Eastern Bengal advantages and opportunities of which they had, perhaps hitherto not had their fair share." But Bengal had to be deprived of the distinction of claiming the capital of India as its own capital as well, and of the opportunities it had thus enjoyed of criticising the Govt. of India and subjecting it to constant pressure from such close quarters. We had already been familiarised to the extent of feeling downright moral contempt for it, with the Doctrine of Compensation in the foreign politics of Europe, according to which Morocco had been given to France for the sake of a free hand for the English in Egypt, and Tripoli had been all but given to Italy while Germany had made her famous panther leap at AGADIR. This fatal doctrine had now peacefully penetrated into the internal administration of India "Eastern Bengal and Assam," wrote the Government of India :—

"Have no doubt benefitted greatly by the Partition, and

the Mohamedans of the province, who form a large majority of the population, are loyal and contented, but the resentment among the Bengalis in both the provinces of Bengal, who hold most of the land, fill the professions and exercise a preponderating influence in public affairs, is as strong as ever."

As I wrote on that occasion :—

"What could be easier than to politely disburden the loyal and contented Peter of his few worldly belongings in order to load the discontented, if not disloyal, Paul with rewards and compensation? The Musalmans have no PANTHER to send to Agadir, and it is too well-established a rule of diplomacy that NO PANTHER, NO COMPENSATION!"

While I declared in the COMRADE that "in our judgment the Musalmans should accept the decision of the Government," I could not but say that they had deserved a better fate. Before the Partition they had laboured under many difficulties and had endured everything quietly as only the weak can endure. It was not they that had clamoured and agitated for the Partition. Nevertheless, the Partition came to them a well-deserved though wholly unexpected blessing. Their condition had begun to improve, and with that their ambitions and hopes. It may even be confessed that, like all NOVEAUX RICHES, these political PARVENUS sometimes held their heads too high and strutted about the peacock manner. But, like the exaltation born of a draught of haschish, it did not last long, and the reaction came with a suddenness and a force that were terrible. The emancipated slaves were, so to speak, once more sold into bondage, and who does not know that revenge is sweet? Their old masters could have been excused if on being placed once more in the position of the slave-driver they had used the lash and the bastinado a little too lavishly. The Musalmans of Eastern Bengal had been made to fight the battle of their rulers against their neighbours, and now that it was no longer convenient for the rulers to continue the fight, they had made their own peace with all convenient speed and had left the Musalmans to the mercy of those against whom they had been used as auxiliaries. It would

be hard to discover in history a more ignoble instance of betrayal in which "loyalty" has been rewarded with deprivation of recently recovered rights, and "Contentment" has been punished as the worst of crimes. Perhaps I may mention without any indiscretion that when immediately after the Announcement I drove over in haste to interview Sir Charles Bayley, the head of the Local Government now thrown on the scrapheap I met Lord Sinha and Sir Benode Mitter who asked me what I thought of the Announcement. I told them that in the case of the Hindus of Bengal the Announcement had been a matter of "give and take," that for "sturdy, loyal" Beharis it had been one of "take" only, but that for the Musalmans of Eastern Bengal it had been one of nothing but "give", and as a reward for their loyalty and contentment they had been given a generous helping of humble pie and then I walked off with the mumbled prayer that they might be spared too acute an attack of indigestion! In the Durbar itself a little earlier I remember that I had been accosted by my old friend Sir Charles Cleveland, Director of the Criminal Intelligence Department, as I was hastily perusing the Announcement. As it happened, I was among the very first in the Press Camp to receive a copy of it from the hands of the official who was distributing them. Sir Charles had humorously asked me if there was anything in the Announcement for me or for him, and I had replied with ill-suppressed bitterness that there was nothing for me, but that there was plenty of work for him. And who can say that my prophecy has not proved true?

Friends, I have gone into this matter at considerable length only because the Announcement has always appeared to me to be a very distinct land-mark in the political progress of the Musalmans. Nothing could have more clearly convinced them that their dependence upon a foreign government for support against sister communities laid them perpetually open to such betrayals. They now realised that they could place no reliance on such support, whether at home or abroad, and it set them thinking that perhaps at a much smaller sacrifice of their interests they could purchase lasting peace and even secure the friendship of their neighbours and fellow-countrymen.

The Muslim League, although never an anti-Hindu or anti-Congress organisation, had at its birth in the very midst of the Partition agitation naturally emphasised in its creed the protection of communal interests and loyalty to Government, even though it had also included therein the promotion of harmony and concord with sister communities. A year after the Durbar Announcement, the Council of The League recommended a change in the creed, and it emphasised in the new creed that it recommended "Self-Government suitable for India" as its ideal. In commenting upon this change, which was eventually accepted by the League in its annual session in the following March, I had stated that for the Musalmans their new political creed was but "the half way house from which their ultimate destination was clearly visible, "and I do not think I can do better in helping you to form a just estimate of our position to-day than quote from the Comrade of that date the following passage which I would ask all Nationalists, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, to consider carefully :—

But it is not so much on the reform of the administration by the administrators and those to whom they are responsible, nor even on the relationship that comes to exist between the ruler and the ruled, that the attainment of self-government depends. Self-government is the necessary corollary of self-realisation, and India as a whole has not yet realised herself. Once her conflicting interests, warring creeds and rival communities not only conceive that India can be one in her soul as she is in her body, but feel her unity as an individual feels the unity of his individual self inspite of the diversity of the various members and organs or his body, and the varying moods of his intellect and soul, there is no power in the world that can deny her self-government. But we would warn our countrymen against playing the sedulous ape in their methods of nation-making as we have warned them in the matter of their choosing their political goal.....In India political unity can be achieved not so much by annihilating smaller units that may appear to conflict with the ultimate scheme of unity, but by recognising their force and inevitableness. If we could choose a motto for a society of nation-makers in India, we coul

suggest nothing better than what the United States of America have adopted. India is to be a Pluribus Unum.

In foreign affairs the year 1912 had opened with far different prospects from those of 1911. Up to the last, Indian Musalmans had entertained the hope that things would right themselves. But this did not happen, and the year ended even worse than it had begun. The sad disillusionment with regard to international morality for which the shameless brigandage of Italy in Tripoli was responsible had greatly affected the Musalmans in the autumn of 1911. If any further disillusionment was needed it was supplied by the action of Russia in Persia and Britain's "sanctimonious acquiescence." In both cases the utmost brutality characterised European aggression. Who can forget the massacres in the Tripoli Oasis or the celebration in Persia of the New Year, which coincided with the anniversary of the Tragedy of Kerbela, when, among others, the Siqat-ul-Islam, the highest ecclesiastic of Northern Persia—"a man universally respected alike for his learning, his piety and his tolerance"—was hanged by the Russians. If anything could surpass these things in the anguish they caused to Muslim minds, it was the threatened aeroplane attack on the Holy Ka'ba by Italy and the actual bombardment of Holy Meshad by Russia which followed them. Truly did Mr. Shuster declare at a banquet given in his honour by the Persia Committee in London on his visit there after his expulsion from Persia :

"I am not bitter about my own experience, but I should be a hypocrite if I pretended not to sympathise with the bitterness of the Mohamedan people who have so forcibly learned the lesson that the Ten Commandments do not apply to inter-national politics. Let anyone who doubts this, review the events of the past year."

These bitter experiences were destined to be followed by those still more bitter in 1912 in the autumn of which broke out the Balkan War which at one time threatened to expel the Turks from Europe after nearly five hundred years.

The attitude of England towards the enemies of Turkey, Persia and Morocco had begun to alienate the sympathies of Indian Musalmans from England ever since 1911, and this estrange-



ment could not but react on their relations with the British officials here, who, in spite of their detestation of the Radical politicians in power in England, could not help looking askance at Indians daring to criticise an English Government with a candour and a courage unusual in a subject race. The Comrade case, which for the first time brought home to Indians the power of the now defunct Press Act for evil, was concerned, as many of you may still remember with the forfeiture of a pamphlet received from the Turks. In this they had only appealed to England for Christian succour against the Balkan Allies whose Macedonian atrocities were therein depicted. While this litigation was going on, the fatal developments following on the demolition of part of a small mosque at Cawnpore embittered Muslim feeling still further. In consequence of all this I had proceeded to England, in company with the then Secretary of the Muslim League, to appeal to the British Government and persuade it to alter a policy, Indian as well as foreign, that seemed to bode no good to any body, and which was sure to drive the Muslims to despair. In this we partly succeeded; but within a year events of far greater magnitude occurred in which the entire world was involved. The War and the events leading to the participation of Turkey not on the same side as England, undid all the good that we had expected to follow the friendly Deputation of Indian Mussalmans which we had taken to wait on Lord Hardinge earlier in the year, and which had been received by the Viceroy with every show of good-will.

When the war with Germany broke out, I think I fairly represented the feeling of educated and responsible Indian Mussalmans, who were too self-respecting to play the sycophant, when I wrote in the Comrade of the 12th August 1914 as follows:

"There are still some sane people among Indians themselves, and though they do not advertise the offer of their personal service to the Government, whatever influence they possess with the people would be used to decrease rather than increase the Government's embarrassment. They could offer no better guarantee than this that they regard India's connection with Great Britain as, at the present

stage of India's growth, indispensable, and we are sure that the less lofty motive of self-interest would wear better and stand the strain of circumstances longer than the lip-loyalty of Ji-Huzurs.

"Whether Great Britain has respected Muslim Indian feeling in her dealings with Turkey, Persia, Morocco or not, whether the utterances of His Majesty's Ministers regarding the Turks in their life and death struggle during the last war have been just and consistent, or unjust and inconsistent; whether their action following two breaches of treaty obligations, by Austria in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and by Italy in the Tripolitanian, have tallied or not with the recent public proclamation of their sense of the sacredness of treaties; whether their conscience has revolted or not at the slaughter of babes and sucklings, unprotected womanhood and bed-ridden age in Tripoli and the Balkans; whether the white Colonials' treatment of their coloured fellow-citizens of the same Empire has been fair or otherwise; whether the Home Government has exerted its full pressure on the Colonials to right the wrong or has only assumed an incredible impotence; whether Indians' claims for an equitable adjustment of rights and duties and for a fair share in guiding the destinies of their own country have been met by the British Bureaucracy in the spirit of friendliness or of jealousy and rancour; whether in the annulment of the Partition of Bengal the Musalmans were treated with due consideration for their loyalty or it was underrated and their contentment taken too much for granted; whether the sanctity of their places of worship and the integrity of their graveyards have been uniformly respected or sometimes lightly sacrificed to the Moloch of Prestige—we say that, irrespective of any or all these considerations, or rather because we have carefully weighed them all against the one supreme consideration, our need of England and her tutelage at the present stage of our national and communal growth, and found her good exceeding by a great deal her evil, we shall remain loyal to her as only freemen can remain loyal, with a sincere devotion and an unbought submission, and this whether she crushes the naval power of Germany and becomes a dictator to Europe, or the last ship of her mighty

Armada sinks in the North Sea and her last soldier falls down and dies round Liege or London.....Even if England may not need us, we have need of her. Believing in political purity rather than in political prudery, we have entered the lists with her biggest bureaucrats in India in time of peace. But in time of war the clash of steel in civic battles must cease and the voice of controversy must be hushed, and if we cannot hastily command in others an enthusiasm for this war which we ourselves do not feel, let us once and for all assure the Government that, so far as we and those within the orbit of our influence are concerned, they can sleep in peace. Let alone Provincial Satraps and the still greater despots of their districts, their meanest, if not their humblest, policeman will find us at his beck and call whenever civic excitement has to be allayed. More than this we cannot proclaim. Less than this we shall adhere".

Friends, I fear I must have exhausted your patience with these long quotations from the COMRADE, but I feel certain of your indulgence if you would only consider the object I have in view. This long narration is intended to show to the world how different were the feelings of Indian Musalmans towards this Government until quite recent times, and what patience we had shown in the face of injustice, indifference and continued callousness.

At the suggestion of Government, and through its own medium, I had even cabled, along with my friend Dr. Ansari, to the late lamented Talaat Pasha urging the Turks to think a thousand times before they participated in the War. And even when war as being forced on Turkey by ill-advised threats such as those of the London Times, my very long, well-known and in the English Press extensively quoted and highly approved article, in reply to that of the TIMES, on the "Choice of the Turks," had shown to what lengths Indian Musalmans were then prepared to go in assisting their foreign Government.

I shall only quote to you the final conclusion at which after very careful and detailed reasoning I had myself arrived in that article, and which I had recommended to the Musalmans for adoption as the policy of the community :

"All truly loyal people ( I wrote ) have closed the chapter of civil controversy with the officials and into that book they are like to look no more. Whatever our grievances, whatever reforms we desire, everything must wait for a more seasonable occasion. Even if the Government were to concede to us all that we ever desired or dreamt ; if, for instance the Muslim University were offered to us on our own terms, or the Press Act repeal were to be announced, or even if Self-Government—were to be conceded to us, we would humbly tell Government this is no time for it, and we must for the present decline such concessions with thanks. Concessions are asked for and accepted in peace. We are not Russian Poles. We need no bribes."

A conclusion such as this had recommended itself even to the Calcutta correspondent of the MORNING POST. And yet it was for publishing this very article that I forfeited the security of the COMRADE Press and had in consequence to discontinue that paper. It was then that a distinguished weekly journal of England, THE NEW STATESMAN, severally criticised the Government of India in a leading article sarcastically headed, "Encouraging Loyalty in India"! And when the war with Turkey actually broke out, a representative of the Associated Press and Reuter interviewed me at Delhi and subsequently informed me that the interview was much appreciated by the Viceroy who had seen it before publication. I had predicted in the previous article that even if war broke out with the Turks the anchor of the Indian Musalmans' loyalty would hold, and now that war had broken out I repeated that the anchor still held. I asked them to commend their souls to God and to place their services at the disposal of the Government for the preservation of peace and tranquility in India. I compared their position to that of the children of parents who had quarrelled with one another. "Right may be on one side or the other, but the sorrow and suffering are in any case those of the children."

In this interview, as also in the last leading article the Comrade was permitted to publish before it closed its doors, it was clearly indicated that Musalmans were placing implicit reliance on the solemn pledges given by the British Govern-

ment and Britain's Allies with regard to their faith and the Holy Places of Islam. I had distinctly pointed out that Arabia must not be attacked nor must the protection of Islam's Holy Places by a really independent Muslim Power be endangered. This was the least to which Indian Musalmans were entitled unless their religion was required by their non-Muslim Government to be a matter of no consequence to them as compared with their "loyalty" to that Government. I may add that I had concluded my interview with the statement that the Muslims could be trusted to act on the precept of Jesus Christ, to render unto Caesar what is due to Caesar. But I was informed by the distinguished Journalist who had recorded the interview that the Censor of Press telegrams, who was no doubt a good Christian, while passing the rest of the message had carefully scored out the exhortation of Jesus Christ. No doubt that astute official, who believed in the supremacy of the State over the Church, thought that if the Muslims were reminded of their duty to render unto Caesar what was due to Caesar, they might perchance remember the accompanying exhortation also to render unto God what was due to God !

This was precisely what happened before very long, and the history of our betrayal is too recent to be repeated in any detail. During the War Musalmans were required, in defiance of their religious obligations to assist Government in waging war against the Khalifa and those engaged in Jihad. The Jazirat-ul-Arab which includes Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia, and which Musalmans were required by their faith at all times to keep free from non-Moslim occupation and control, was attacked and occupied by Great Britain and her Allies, and is still under their control in defiance of the Prophet's well-known testamentary injunction. The Holy Places of Islam, which are not particular buildings merely, but territories, including the three Sacred Harams of Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem, have been filched from the successor of the Prophet and Commander of the Faithful, who is their only accredited Servant and Warden, and even to-day he is not permitted to occupy, defend and serve them. The dismemberment of the Empire of the Khalifa, the appointment of non-Muslim Mandatories to control various

portions of it ; and the consequent weakening of the temporal power of Islam to the point of danger to its spiritual influence through the possible pressure of temporal power of rival creeds openly advocated by the Allies, and none of them insisted upon this course so relentlessly up to the last as Great Britain herself. As we all know, Greece was her own brutal nominee and agent in the execution of this policy even after the armistice in defiance of all laws of peace or war, and howsoever much the other Allies also may have resisted Ismet Pasha at Lausanne, it was Great Britain herself that was the chief obstacle in the path of Ghazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha-to the very end of this tragic tale. Discrimination was made against Muslim governments and populations in various other ways also, such as by the denial of self-determination to the Muslim populations of territories forcibly annexed or occupied and controlled by non-Muslim Powers. While all this was going on, Indian Muslim opinion, unrepresented at the Peace Conference, and represented before the Allies themselves only by unrepresentative Musalmans, was vigorously suppressed in India by means of those well-known engines of tyranny and terrorism, the Press Act, the Defence of Indian Act, Regulation III of 1818 and, finally, the declaration of Martial law in parts of India, over and above the abuse of the ordinary penal law of the land

I have already declared it as my view that the bitter-experience of ill-will against the Muslim States and populations abroad hastened the conversion of the Musalmans to the view that to rely on this foreign and non-Muslim Government for support and sympathy, even after making every conceivable sacrifice for its sake, was futile, and that if they were in need of support and sympathy they must have a lasting, equitable settlement with the sister communities of India. The same course was clearly indicated by the betrayal of the Musalmans of Eastern Bengal. And the time too was ripe for a Hindu Muslim re-union. True partnership and association, whether in business, social relationship or in love, requires that there should be no great disparity between those that are to associate together as partners, friends or lovers. The same is true of politics. Union of the rich and the poor, of the old and the young, of the learned and the

ignorant, is perhaps possible but far from common; and it was a true instinct that guided Syed Ahmad Khan in opposing, a generation previously, the voting together of the strong and the weak. During the controversy with regard to the Minto-Morley Reforms, however, Musalmans had developed to some extent the quality of self-assertion so necessary in politics. But ever since the outbreak of the Tripolitan war they had to struggle against the repressive policy of the Government, and it is not with a view to praise my own community that I say it has now to a considerable extent made up the distance between itself and the more advanced communities of India by dint of forced marches which it had to undertake throughout this momentous period.

It was at my brother's suggestion and my own during our internment that in 1915 the Muslim League held its annual session at Bombay where the Congress was also to meet. Maulana Mazhar-ul-Haque, the veteran Congressman, who was nevertheless one of the founders of the Muslim League, and who had valiantly stuck to the Congress all these years, in spite of the fact that the bulk of his community was still following the lead of Syed Ahmad Khan given thirty years ago, was now elected President of the Muslim League with great **Eclat**. He was called upon to execute the mandate of his own community and bring about a joint meeting of the political leaders in the camps of the League and the Congress in order to adjust the future political relations of the various communities concerned. Mr. Jinnah's persuasive advocacy was added to the vigour of the President, and, last but not least, the audacious, courage and vehement perseverance of that intrepid Muslim patriot, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, brought about the rapprochement which was to bear fruit in the following year in the historic Lucknow Compact. So rapid had been the progress of the Mussalmans that a mildewed critic from among their own community observed that Lord Sinha, the Bengali President of the Bombay session of the Indian National Congress, had travelled thither by the same train as his Behari neighbour and brother-lawyer who presided over the Muslim League, and the two had borrowed one another's Presidential Ad-

dresses in order to compare notes. But, said the critic with more wit than wisdom, the two Presidents forgot to take back their own productions and by an irony of fate Maulana Mazharul-Haque had read to his Muslim audience as his own the pungent oration characteristic of the Bengali, and Lord Sinha had done likewise and read to the Congress delegates the cautious and halting address of the "ever-loyal" Muslim.

Government had now come to realise what would be the inevitable result of the Bombay rapprochement, and it is a matter of history how the Muslim Leaguers were compelled to conclude in camera the session begun under such auspices. Thenceforward, the Congress and the Muslim League always met for their annual sessions at the same centre and worked in entire co-operation. The result was inevitable and could well have been foreseen. If the Congress President of the Ahmedabad Session was lodged in the Alipore gaol when he should have been occupying the Presidential chair at Ahmedabad, the President of the Muslim League for the same year was indicted for waging War against the King at Ahmedabad itself on account of his Presidential address, and, even when acquitted by the unanimous verdict of the jury on that charge, was consigned to the Ahmedabad gaol after being convicted of sedition. It is a feather in the Muslim cap that while Sriji Das has brilliantly led the Swarajists to victory in Bengal and elsewhere, his Muslim Confrere, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, is now sharing the honours of Yerrawada gaol with Mahatma Gandhi, having in the meantime more than doubled his original sentence, in spite of the restricted opportunities for indulging in criminal practices that a prisoner's life affords, and has thus corrected the error of a blundering jury !

But it was not only a case of safeguarding Muslim communal interests without leaning for support externally on a foreign Government and harbouring suspicions against sister communities. Musalmans would have been more than human, or less than that, if they had been indifferent to the continued injustice done to India and Indians collectively. Having been taught by their political preceptors in the past that Government could never for long leave a wrong unredressed, they had followed the policy of "wait and see." They had



waited long, and yet all that they saw was a series of wrongs done to India—wrongs which remained unrepented. Their patience was at last giving way and they were beginning to enlist as Congress members in annually increasing numbers. This was a hopeful indication of their realizing that they had to protect not only their comparatively petty communal interests, but also the larger Indian national interests, which were as surely theirs to protect as those of sister communities. They now realized more than ever that by being Muslims they could not cease to be Indians. The Congress sessions of Calcutta, Bombay and Delhi had progressively justified the National appellation of the Congress. But it was reserved for General Dyer to break down entirely the barrier that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had for temporary purposes erected more than thirty years previously, and to summon the Musalmans of India to the Congress held at Amritsar in 1919 as the unsuspecting Herald of India's Nationhood. The bullets of his soldiery made no distinction between Hindu and Muslim, and clearly Providence had so designed things that a community even more loyal than the Musalmans, namely our brave Sikh brothers, should also dye the sacred soil of their religious capital at Amritsar with their own blood along with that of Hindu and Muslim martyrs.

Much of the suffering undergone at Jallianwalla Bagh was, however, of a passive character, not invited nor cheerfully borne, and the terror that the proceeding of the administrators of Martial Law had created seemed at one time to have paralysed the people of the Punjab soon after they had discovered their national identity through common suffering. But the Punjab was not left to sorrow alone. More than one patriotic Indian proceeded to the Punjab, but I feel confident they themselves would be the first to admit that I do them no injustice when I declare that the most historic event that then took place during those eventful days was the "Coming of the Mahatma!"

The Mahatma's story is too well-known to you all, and now happily to a good-many well-informed people outside India also, for me to recapitulate it here. His experiences in South Africa had taught him that it was idle to expect

justice for Indians overseas unless justice was done to Indians at home and India secured a Government of her own. This of course, did not mean that the British connection must necessarily be broken; and even to-day not only he, whose forbearance is proverbial, but also followers of his like myself who cannot pretend to be equally forbearing believe, inspite of the bitter experiences of the last few years, that the truest Swaraj for India is not incompatible with the British connection if the British nation and British Government only undergo a change of heart and make a PRYASCHIT for the past. It was no doubt to deliver India from her bonds, spiritual no less than political, that the Mahatma had returned to the Motherland.

But the methods that he himself believed in and inculcated to his fellow-countrymen were not those that would be called "political" in the politics-ridden West. To him, as to all great teachers of mankind, Life was a single synthesis, however much we might analyse it for the convenience of philosophical study, and there was no direct antithesis between the political and the spiritual.

Many have compared the Mahatma's teachings, and latterly his personal sufferings, to those of Jesus (on whom be peace); but the analogy goes farther than many have yet realised. Jesus was a Jew, and those who lovingly followed him acclaimed him as the Messiah of the House of David who had come to restore to the Israelites their long lost independence and power. Just as the "Tragedy of History" had been illustrated by the doom required by long-gathering guilt in the case of the Ten Tribes of the kingdom of Samaria who were crushed and practically annihilated or dispersed by Assyria more than seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, so was it illustrated again a century and a quarter later in the case of their no less guilty brothers of Judah when Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian, destroyed the Temple of Solomon, razed Jerusalem to the ground, and, making the Jews his captives, carried them into exile.

Ever since then the Israelites had dreamt dreams of revenge and restoration, and the victory of Cyrus seemed at one time to realise all that had been hoped. The re-building of the Temple had commenced, and after a temporary suspen-

sion resumed. Zerubbabel, who was of the line of David, was the hope of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the son of Iddo, who looked forward to the political regeneration of the Jews, consequent on the overthrow and destruction of "the kingdoms of the nations." The line of David was hoped to be restored in the person of Zerubbabel himself, and the Messianic predictions of earlier prophets thus fulfilled. This prediction was, however, not fulfilled at the time and whatever became of Zerubbabel, who disappeared with the coronation scene in Zechariah, he never wore a real crown, nor sat upon the throne of his fathers.

Israel was destined never more to taste the sweets of independence ; but, whether under the yoke of Greeks or of Romans, it never lost the hope of restoration. "The triumphal and often cruel entry of Greek and Roman civilization into Asia threw it back upon its dreams. More than ever it invoked the Messiah as judge and avenger of the people. A complete renovation, a revolution which would shake the world to its very foundations, was necessary in order to satisfy the enormous thirst for vengeance excited in it by the sense of its superiority and by the sight of its humiliation" (Renan).

Herod, the Great who had contrived to secure some semblances of independence from Rome had died about the year in which Jesus was born, and "his three sons were only lieutenants of Romans, analogous to the Rajas of India under the English dominion" (Renan). When during the childhood of Jesus, Archelaus, its ethnarch was deposed by Augustus, the last trace of Self-Government was lost to Jerusalem. Judea was thenceforward part of a dependency of the province of Syria which was governed by an imperial legate. A series of Roman procurators, subordinate in important matters to the imperial legate of Syria, of whom Pontius Pilate is so well-known to Christian history, were constantly occupied in extinguishing the volcano which was seething beneath their feet. Continual sedition, excited by the zealots of Mosaism did not cease, in fact, to agitate Jerusalem during all this time. To cast down the Roman eagle, and destroy the works of arts raised by the Herods, in which the Mosaic regulations were not always respected,

were perpetual temptations to fanatics who had reached that degree of exaltation which removed all care for life. The Samaritans were agitated by movements of a similar nature. The "Zelotes" or "Sicarii," pious assassins who imposed on themselves the task of killing whoever in their estimation broke the Law, began to appear. A movement which had much more influence upon Jesus was that of Judas, the Gaulonite or Galilean. The Census which was the basis of taxation by the foreigner was hated as almost an impiety. That order in the sixth year of the Christian era had fully reawakened the theocratic abhorrence of Gentile government and had caused a great fermentation. In fact, an insurrection had broken out in the Northern provinces from which the greatest achievements of the Jewish people had always proceeded. "Men deemed themselves on the eve of the great renovation. The Scriptures, tortured into diverse meanings, fostered the most colossal hopes. In each line of the writings of the Old Testament they saw the assurance, and in a manner the programme, of the future reign which was to bring peace to the righteous, and to seal for ever the work of God." (Renan.)

When Jesus contemplated the world at the outset of his ministry he was called upon to make his choice of the weapons of reform. The conditions of his people and his times, as I think rather than any fundamental objection to the use of force in all circumstances, as Christian churchmen profess, made him pin his faith to non-resistance of evil. In other words, he decided to defeat force by his own suffering just as Husain subsequently did at Karbala, although the latter died sword in hand. But whatever view we may take of the choice of Jesus, it is certain that his fundamental idea was different from that of the political reformers of his time such as Judas the Gaulonite, whose example had shown him the futility of the popular seditions of his day. If ever he was the author of the disclaimer: "My kingdom is not of this world," he must have meant that he was not setting out to defeat Satan "the Prince of this world" with the help of Satanic weapons. H,

was not "wordly" in his methods; but this does not mean that he was "other-wordly." All that it signifies is that he was "unwordly." Having resisted the temptation to be a political revolutionary on the very threshold of his career as a teacher, he never succumbed to it. The revolution he wished to effect was moral revolution, and although he did not escape the fate of "rebels" and was placed on the Cross by order of Pilate with the description "King of the Jews", which is, in spite of its intended irony significant of the Roman Procurator's political suspicions, Liberty for him meant in the first instance Truth and self-purification. Renan was, to my mind a typical Frenchman of his times for whom the claims of the State were paramount, and he could neither understand nor appreciate the thoroughgoing theocracy of Jesus, the "Servant of the Lord." Nevertheless, I agree with him in the conclusion that "as an austere republican or a zealous patriot he would not have arrested the great current of the affairs of his age; but in declaring that politics are insignificant, he has revealed to the world that one's country is not everything and that the man is before, and higher than, the citizen," Vengeance which was consuming the Israelites was the Lord's. Jesus counselled the upholders of the *lex talionis* who claimed an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth that he who had been smitten on one cheek should turn the other cheek also to the smiter. So much for the foreign tyrant. As for his own countryman, the Jew, who, falling a victim to his own weakness and a fear of the Gentile masters of Judea, had become a publican or tax-collector on behalf of the foreigner, he too could easily claim a share in the abounding life of Jesus. The idea of being all powerful by suffering and resignation, and of triumphing over force by purity of heart, is as old as the days of Abel and Cain, the first progeny of man. But since it so eminently suited the conditions of the times of Jesus, and the record of his ministry, however inadequate or defective, has still preserved for us this part of his teaching in some detail, it has come to be regarded by Christians and even by many non-Christians as an idea peculiar to Jesus.

Be that as it may, it was just as peculiar to Mahatma Gandhi also ; but was reserved for a Christian government to treat as a felon the most Christ-like man of our times and to penalise as a disturber of the public peace the one man engaged in public affairs who comes nearest to the Prince of Peace. The political conditions of India just before the advent of the Mahatma resembled those of Judea on the eve of the advent of Jesus and the prescription that he offered to those in search of a remedy for the ills of India was the same that Jesus had dispensed before in Judea. Self-purification through suffering ; a moral preparation for the responsibilities of government ; self-discipline as the condition precedent of Sawarj—this was Mahatma's creed and conviction ; and those of us who have been privileged to have lived in the glorious year that culminated in the Congress session at Ahmedabad have seen what a remarkable and what a rapid change he wrought in the thoughts, feelings and actions of such large masses of mankind.

Mahatma Gandhi had been in direct touch with the Indian Government, had often counselled the Viceroy, and had continued his assistance to the British Government in its hour of need in South Africa by working as the unpaid recruiting sergeant of that government in India. This had indeed amazed those who could not associate him whose life itself was Sermon on the Mount with recruitment of blood-spilling soldiers. Yet even so loyal a subject and so staunch a friend was compelled to oppose a measure of that Government which no one reading British declarations of gratitude for India's loyalty in the early stages of the War could have conceived as the possible culmination of that gratitude at the end of that War. A Reform Scheme was under consideration professedly for enlarging the Indians' share in Indian administration. But while one hand was declared to be about to give a wider franchise to India, the other was already busy robbing her even of her narrowly-restricted liberties. This is what my brother and I wrote to Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy, from our internment at Chhindwara on the 24th April, 1919, when we were about to court imprisonment

by breaking the Defence of India Regulations which had curtailed our liberties four years previously.

"The War is now over ; but the spirit of tyranny that it generated is still abroad ; and while, on the one hand, it is being proclaimed in high-sounding phrases that those who are assembled at Paris to decide the destinies of the world on a more equitable and humane basis that Brute Force are not the masters of the People but their servants, the Government, on the other hand, is denying to the people of India the barest expression on questions that vitally concern them. Not only is the gag not to be removed yet from our own mouths, but a gag of prodigious proportions has been prepared now for silencing more than three hundred millions of God's articulate creatures. The Rowlatt Bill just enacted in the most tyrannical manner has ended the reign of law and substituted a reign of terror in its place, and although it affects every section of the people of India. the Musalmans are certain to be its first and its worst victims. It has been the Muslim Press that has suffered most under the Press Act, and the same has been true of the Defence of India Act, if we only exclude the unfortunate young men of Bengal rotting in solitary cells or swampy Islands without trial or hope of release. Even those who profess a pathetic optimism and hope against hope that the bureaucracy armed with the strength of the giant will not use it as tyrannically as the giant, need only have access to our own experience to be cured of this distressing delusion. We, who have already had enough experience 'executive discretion' and of "investigating authorities' sitting IN CAMERA, farcically enquiring into undefined charges, and dealing with undisclosed evidence without the help of any code of procedure or law of evidence, submitting reports that cannot bear the light of day and being finally dismissed as ignorant persons for all their pains, can claim to speak with some authority, and say that the BLACK ACT is nothing more or less than the virtual outlawery of a fifth of mankind."

It was our privilege to point out to Mahatma Gandhi the real import and scope of the Rowlatt Bills, soon after

he commenced his famous Satyagraha campaign. This was the first dawn of the era of Non-Co-operation. The occurrences at Delhi, Amritsar and Lahore, and Ahmedabad and other parts of Gujarat are matters of history, and although the Mahatma's admission of his "Himalayan error" has been proclaimed to the world by the Government, and the official and unofficial scribes who have been enlisted in its support, none seems to have had the honesty to admit that the Mahatma's blunder would have overtopped Everest if he had not then united his nation as he did in defence of its liberties. At the very worst the "Himalayan error" consisted in miscalculating the extent of the people's discipline and self-restraint. But if Mahatma Gandhi had left the Rowlatt Bills unchallenged, he would have been guilty of a sin of which he could hardly have purged himself by any kind of expiation. Palance all the violence of the infuriated mobs on one side, and on the other side place the cowardliness of a surrender to the slavery sought to be imposed on the nation by these Bills and in spite of my utter abhorrence of such violence I say with all deliberateness that on the Day of Judgment I would rather stand before God's White Throne guilty of all this violence than have to answer for the unspeakable sin of so cowardly a surrender. In saying this I am only applying to the situation for years earlier my chief's own admission in the court of the judge who has ordered that for six years he should "be buried alive." "I knew" admitted the Mahatma, "that I was playing with fire." But he also added:—"I ran the risk, and if I was set free I would still do the same." Christ-like in his methods he has been Christ-like to the end. He had 'steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem' and not even the prospect of the Cross could make him shrink from treading the path of duty.

I would like to re-state here the position of men like myself with regard to non-violence. I am not a Christian believing in the sinfulness of all resistance to evil, and in their practice, even if not in their theory, the vast bulk of Christians and all Christian States are in full agreement with me. The last War presented an excellent opportunity to these states and to Christians at large to demonstrate



their belief in the doctrine of non-resistance. But we know that none of the States followed it, and the few Christians whose practice was not divorced from their professions were the "conscientious objectors" contemptuously called "conchies," who were subjected to ridicule and contumely and were punished like felons. But that was not all. Every national Church blessed the national Flag and sent the national warriors as on a Crusade. As a Mussalman and a follower of the Last of the Prophets (on whom be Allah's blessing and peace!), I believe that war is a great evil; but I also believe that there are worse things than War "There is no compulsion in faith", says the Quran, because force and religious conviction have no common denominator. They belong to two very different planes. But when war is forced on a Muslim, and the party that does so has no other argument but this, then, as a Mussalman and the follower of the last of the Prophets, I may not shrink but must give the enemy battle on his own ground and beat him with his own weapons. If he respects no other argument than force and would use it against me, I would defend my Faith against his onslaught and would use against him all the force I could command—force without stint and without cessation. But when, in the language of the Quran, "War hath dropped her weapons", my sword must also be sheathed. Warfare according to the Quran, is an evil; but persecution is a worse evil and may be put down with the weapons of war. When persecution ceases, and every man is free to act with the sole motive of securing divine good-will, warfare must cease. These are the limits of violence in Islam, as I understand it, and I cannot go beyond these limits without infringing the Law of God. But I have agreed to work with Mahatma Gandhi, and our compact is that as long as I am associated with him I shall not resort to the use of force even for purposes of self-defence. And I have willingly entered into this compact because I think we can achieve victory without violence; that the use of violence for a nation of three hundred and twenty millions of people should be a matter of reproach to it and finally, that victory achieved of the nation, but mainly of the fighting classes, which

with violence must be not the victory of all sections are more sharply divided in India from the rest of the nation than perhaps anywhere else in the world. Our Swaraj must be the Raj of all, and in order to be that it must have been won through the willing sacrifice of all. If this is not so, we shall have to depend for its maintenance as well on the prowess of the fighting classes, and this we must not do. Swaraj must be won by the minimum sacrifice of the maximum number, and not by the maximum sacrifice of the minimum number. Since I have full faith in the possibilities of the programme of constructive work of non-violent Non-Co-operation, I have no need to hanker after violence. Even if this programme fails to give us victory, I know that suffering willingly and cheerfully undergone will prove to have been the best preparation even for the effective use of Force. But God willing, the constructive programme will not fail us if we work with a will and accustom the nation to undergo the small sacrifices that it entails.

Here I may ask those of my fellow-countrymen who shrink even these small sacrifices whether they have considered what it is that a soldier who goes to a battle is prepared to sacrifice. As the Bible tells us: "Greater love hath no man than he that lay down his life for his friend". Our own compatriots went to war for a cause not their own to the number of a million and a half. Can we who pride ourselves on the strength of our national feeling shrink even from the small sacrifices that non-violent Non-Co-operation demands? But in reality our present programme is but the beginning of national work, and Swaraj when it is attained would require even greater sacrifices than those of a soldier. To die for a cause is after all not so very difficult. Men at all times and in all countries have done it, and they have often done it for very poor causes. To die for a cause is not very difficult. The harder thing is to live for a cause, and, if need be, suffer for it; and the cause that we must live and suffer for must be the realisation in India of the Kingdom of God.

These being my innermost convictions, I cannot help marvelling at the audacity of those that attribute to us

a desire to involve the country in violence, carnage and anarchy. They presume to demand from us who stand between them and violence an assurance of non-violence. And yet their own hands are red with the blood of the innocents shed in Jallianwalla Bagh—blood still as unrepented as it is unavenged. Contrast this patent insincerity with the frank acceptance by our chief of his full responsibility for Chauri-Chaura and the Bombay riots and you have the measure of the moral worth of Non-Co-operation and of its relentless opponents. The Mahatma's confession is proclaimed to the world by this Christian Government; but I wonder if this Government is also prepared to attribute to the Sermon on the Mount the slicing off by St. Peter of the ear of Malchus! Who knows how much blood might not have been shed by the disciples of the Prince of Peace if the census of arms taken by the Master had produced a tale of many more than two swords, and had his followers been more steadfast in their support of him than the self-same St. Peter who, according to the Gospels, denied him three times before cock-crow? When the guilt of Chauri-Chaura and similar unfortunate occurrences is being judged, it is necessary to take into consideration not only that which was done but also that which had been resisted. Never before in the annals of India have the people felt as intensely as they have done since the dawn of Non-Co-operation, and the marvel is not that the fury of the mob has resulted in so much bloodshed but that the manhood of India has been successfully revived with so little of it. I challenge anyone to show another instance in the history of mankind where hundreds of millions of people have been roused to stand up for their liberties and have remained so peaceful as the people of India led by Mahatma Gandhi. There is no country of Europe, with all its cold, frog blood, that would have experienced a deluge of blood in like circumstances. That India has escaped such a deluge is due to Mahatma Gandhi and his co-workers.

In dealing with the question of Non-Violence I have digressed and anticipated a good deal, and I must now revert to my narrative. At the Congress at Amritsar

the main resolution was concerned with the Reforms, and although only four years have passed since that session, it would surprise not a few to know that in the discussions over the resolution my friend Deshbandhu Das, that leader of the Council entry party and my late chief, Lokmanya Tilak, were entirely opposed to Co-operation and the working of the Reformed Councils, while Mahatma Gandhi had himself moved an amendment to that resolution. This we designed to commit the Congress to the principle of the co-operation of the people with the authorities in working the Reforms in response to the sentiments expressed in the Royal Proclamation. Neither side willing to give way, and as is usual on such occasions, the protracted discussions in the subject Committee were delaying the discussions in the Congress and prolonged the session. This was the first occasion, as I have already told you on which I took part in the Congress and for a novice my own contribution is not altogether undeserving of notice. My brother and I tried to discover a formula which could be acceptable both to Mahatma Gandhi and to Lokmanya Tilak and Deshbandhu Das. We at last succeeded in this effort, and Srijiut Bepin Chandra Pal moved, and I seconded, an amendment recommending to the Congress that "the provisions of the Reforms Act be used, as far as possible, with a view to secure full Responsible Government at an early date." This cleared the air, and finally both parties agreed to support a resolution declaring that "the Congress trusts that, so far as may be possible, the people will so work the Reforms as to secure an early establishment of full Responsible Government." It was with this addition that the Congress passed the resolution moved by Deshbandhu Das and seconded by Lokmanya Tilak, which declared India to be fit at the moment for full Responsible Government, characterised the Reforms Act as inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing and urged that Parliament should take early steps to establish full responsible Government in India in accordance with the principle of self-determination. I have recalled these details only to show that even at Amritsar Mahatma Gandhi and his co-workers were willing to co-operate with Government so far as

was possible. And yet otherwise so entirely changed was the atmosphere at this session of the Congress that after my long separation from my people I could not help being greatly impressed by the change. The Hindus and Musalmans were no longer enemies or even rivals, but were comrades and brothers in arms. There was no longer a plethora of set speeches suggestive of mid-night oil, "full of sound and fury signifying nothing." There was a new earnestness which indicated that the resolutions of the Congress were resolutions indeed, in the sense that the nation was RESOLVED to act. And above all, it was clear that fear of fellow-man was no longer to be the compelling motive in India, and that the only fear this land would know in future would be the fear of God. So struck was I by this amazing change that I quoted in my speech at Amritsar the couplet of a fellow-townsmen of mine who had said :—

One round of the wine cup was like a century long cycle of Time ; when left the tavern we found that the whole world had changed.

But so far it was only a change in the character and outlook of the people. Their policy was, however, also destined to undergo an entire sea-change. And it was Mahatma Gandhi who at Amritsar was insisting on the people's co-operation with the authorities that was destined to be the first and, in the beginning, almost the sole advocate of No-Co-operation. What was it that had wrought this change of policy ? I must confess my feelings towards this ; Government had undergone a complete change during the War, and in particular since the Armistice towards the end of 1918. When now I read in the old files of the Comrade the publicly expressed expectations I had entertained from this Government not only at the commencement of the year 1911, but even as late as the end of 1914, it appears as if I was examining the newly discovered bones of an animal now altogether extinct. It is true that as late as in December, 1919, I had taken, with regard to co-operation with the authorities, a middle position between Mahatma Gandhi on the one side, and Deshbandhu Das and Lokmanya Tilak on the other which eventually

became the position of the entire Congress. But I was even then not very hopeful of the possibility of such co-operation of the Musalmans with the authorities had led them. And I had like-wise realised that what had happened at Jallianwalla Bagh, in the Crawling Lane, and at the Dak-Bungalow at Manianwalla was not a succession of unconnected incidents, in which the thoughtless fury of the officials had suddenly vented itself, but a series of acts symptomatic of the disease from which this foreign bureaucracy was inevitably suffering. I was thoroughly convinced that this disease was congenital with the system, and if the system continued such incidents were bound to recur, and Government would inevitably be a succession of Jallianwalla Bagh unless the British underwent a complete change of heart. The Duke of Connaught, when he came out to India in the beginning of 1921 to open the Reformed Legislatures, appealed to us to forget and forgive. I was, and still am, prepared to forgive; but forgot I could not, and would not. To forget only means for the awakened sleeper to go back to sleep and to dream the pleasant dream he had been dreaming before he had awakened to the stern reality. But Mahatma Gandhi was not yet convinced of all this, and his conversion came a little later. For many months after the Amritsar session he continued to live in the hope that England would yet repent, and while restoring the integrity and independence of the Khilafat, and evacuating the Jazirat-ul-Arab, England would redress the great wrong done to the people of the Punjab. In fact, it was not a mere hope that sustained him but an absolute conviction, and when he too was at last disillusioned, and would indicate in the process of preparing the programme of his constructive work a profound and thoroughgoing want of belief in the good intentions of England so that even we would suggest that perhaps he was going too far, he used to explain this by saying that he was a more recent, and therefore a more zealous convert. When the last Petition that Muslim India addressed to England through the Indian Khilafat Delegation, in the interview that we had with Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George, the ex-Premier of England proved

the utter futility of such appeals; and when the Punjab wrong was treated as an "error of judgment" to be rewarded by a pension paid out of India's poverty to the murderer of her innocent sons, and to the cold-blooded approver of this "error" who enjoying the safety of a Government House surrounded by armed guards, had not even the justification of General Dyer, then Mahatma Gandhi lost all faith in co-operation between the rulers and the ruled.

Much has been said and written about Non-co-operation and, if our opponents, or even some of our friends, would not understand its significance even now. I cannot hope to enlighten them in this address. I will, therefore, content myself with saying that briefly it means that if we may not resist evil, at least we will not assist it. It is true we expect that if the Indian nation is prepared to make such sacrifices as Non-Co-operation entails, this foreign Government would be absolutely paralysed. But although we do contemplate such a result, it is little more than incidental. Our movement, even through its name suggests that it is of a negative character, is in reality not so. It is essentially of much more positive character. It does not directly aim at the paralysis of others; its direct aim is to remove our own paralysis. Every item of the Non-Co-operation programme, with which I shall presently have to deal, had a strong constructive as well as a destructive side, and we shall stand or fall according as we succeed in our construction or not. But if we do not destroy, or, in other words, if we continue to avail ourselves of all that the Government has constructed for the continuance of its own existence, and as a trap for our destruction, we shall neither stand nor even fall, but shall absolutely cease to exist. Even if our direct aim was to paralyse the Government it was entirely compatible with the purest ethic, and even with the doctrine of Love associated with the name of Jesus Christ and now of Mahatma Gandhi. And I maintain that such a paralysis of Government is clearly possible. Friends, very early in my career as a goal bird I was struck with the system of co-operation followed in Indian gaols. Every prisoner

gets a remission of a few days at the end of every month for "a clean bill of health" during the month ; but some of the prisoners who succeeded in winning the confidence and favour of the local gaol authorities are made watchmen, convict-overseers or convict-warders, and besides enjoying other privileges during the rest of their prison life, they earn a more liberal remission of their sentence every month. Every one in this Pandal who has passed through that gateway of freedom called Prison and I trust there are a good many present here to-day—is familiar with the convict-overseers and warders who share the duty of keeping watch and ward during the night with the paid warders employed by the gaol administration. As a rule the few paid warders pass the night enjoying tolerably sound sleep, or at the very worst, doze out their period of sentinel duty. But at the end of every half-hour the goal resounds with the cries of the prisoners who keep the real watch and ward. "All's well !" is repeated from every corner of the gaol, and so long as this continues the paid warders can sleep the sleep of the just. And this, my friends, is the parable of co-operation. We have lost our liberties and are kept enchained through the services of others who are as much deprived of their liberties as we ourselves except for a few petty privileges that they seem to enjoy. Meanwhile the few foreigners who keep us in servitude can enjoy sleep and repose because the co-sharers of our servitude repeat from time to time from every corner of India's vast Bastille the reassuring cry, "All is well !" The only difference is that whereas the convict-watchmen, overseers and warders can in this way at least secure their release from prison a little before their fellow-prisoners over whom they keep watch and ward, our co-operating friends, who are our comrades in slavery cannot look forward even to an earlier release. In fact, they have lost even the sense of slavery, and slavishly hug the very chains that keep them enslaved. As I wrote in the prison itself

Leave off worrying for me, heedless fool ; weep over thine own captivity ; that which thou deemest to be an ornamental is nothing less than a chain.

Friends, I feel certain, I have exhausted you as well



as myself with this somewhat exhaustive historical narrative, commencing with the Indian Mutiny and coming down to our own era of Non-co-operation. But in thus narrating past history I had an end in view. I cannot act the part of a dictator to any of you; and yet I want you to co-operate with me. Possessing no such personality as the Mahatma's and being as unwilling to bind a spell over you as I am incapable of doing it, I could only lead you to the conclusions which after half a lifetime of blindness and much blundering I have at last reached by demonstrating to you that our safest guide, the experience of several generations, inevitably leads us to the same. Experience must be our most cherished trophy made up of weapons that have hurt us. And here I appeal to the experience of my co-religionists in particular who are being diligently diverted from the path to which their history during the last sixty years and more has guided them. Granted that Non-Co-operation has failed, and that co-operation with our non-Muslim fellow-countrymen is a vain hope, a snare and a delusion—though I am far from granting it except for argument's sake—still we have got to suggest an alternative policy. I ask them not to accept my lead but to be in their turn my guide themselves. Whether they could lead me, that is now the question! If Non-Co-operation with our foreign masters and co-operation with Indian fellow-slaves of other faiths is not possible, what is the alternative that they have to place before us to-day? Are we to “progress backwards” till we begin to walk on all fours? Shall we co-operate with our foreign rulers and fight with our non-Muslim countrymen as we used to fight before? And if we do that, what hope have we of any better results than we achieved for ourselves in the settlements after the Tripoli and the Balkan Wars, or nearer home, in the unsettlement of a “settled fact” in Bengal? No, friends, that book is closed and into it we shall look no more. You have no alternative better than Non-co-operation with the foreigners and co-operation with our neighbours, nor have I. And it is futile to waste our time in worrying over the impossible.

It is said that we can have no grievance now after

the Treaty of Lausanne. You, friends, are in a better position to know how that Treaty came to be concluded than I who had to undergo for a year and a half solitary confinement in all but a technical sense, and have not been in touch with public affairs. But I have studied in some of the back numbers of the newspapers of those days something of what transpired in connection with the revision of the Treaty of Sevres while I was still in prison. You all know about the historic telegram despatched to the Secretary of State by the Government of India after consulting and receiving the general concurrence of the Local Governments, including their Ministers. You will agree that it fell far short not only of Muslim aspirations and sentiments, but also of the requirements of Islamic Law, since it did not say anything about the evacuation of the Jazirat-ul-Arab, and only recommended the Sultan's suzerainty over the Holy Places. In fact, the Government of India undoubtedly, even if haltingly, admitted all this when they said: "We are conscious that it may be impossible to satisfy India's expectations in their entirety," though Mr. Chamberlain had the impudence to say that "the terms far exceeded even the demands of the warmest friends of the Turks." And yet what a storm did the world witness over the publication of even such a telegram. The Secretary of State's resignation was demanded by the Premier, and the King-Emperor "had been pleased to approve of its acceptance." In other words Mr. Montagu was ignominiously dismissed. As Reuter pointed out, "Mr. Chamberlain's announcement in the House of Commons was received with fierce welcoming cheers from the majority of the Unionists; and the "Die-Hards", specially delighted, could hardly contain their satisfaction." "Never before", said another message of "Reuter has the House of Commons re-echoed with such exultant cheering as greeted the announcement of Mr. Montagu's resignation. It emanated from the Unionist benches, but was so loud and prolonged that it seemed general. Some enthusiasts even waved handkerchief."

The most charitable explanation with regard to the attitude of Mr. Montagu's own party, and the party that is the rising hope of such Indians as still cling to the

idea of receiving freedom as the gift of the foreigner, is contained in the earlier message of Reuter that "Liberal and Labour members received the news without an expression of opinion." To-day it may perhaps be urged that the Government of India are as anxious as the Muslim leaders themselves to arrive at a satisfactory settlement of the questions still at issue between Musalmans and Great Britain. But of what good is that to us so long as the Government of India is only "a subordinate branch of the British Government six thousand miles away" whose "dictation to the British Government" as to what line it ought to pursue in such matters seems to Lord Curzon "quite intolerable." This is what Lord Curzon wrote to Mr. Montagu "before giving him the sack" even though poor Mr. Montagu thought that he was only being let off with a warning. But evidently he had forgotten that at Denshawi there was flogging as well as hanging and that Lord Curzon's final court could be trusted not to let off such criminals as he with a warning, but to warn and hang him also for the same offence.

Not one of those believing Musalmans who is dissatisfied to-day with our Policy of Non-Co-operation with Government and co-operation among the Indians could honestly say that Muslim Indian feeling received anything even approaching proper consideration at the hands of Great Britain. And yet hear what this former Viceroy of India, the same who posed as the benefactor of the Musalmans in partitioning Bengal in 1905, has to say about our cry of anguish at the partitioning of the Khilafat fifteen years later. In his letter to Mr. Montagu he writes: "But the part India has sought to play or been allowed to play in this series of events passes my comprehension...Is Indian opinion always to be the final court of Muslim appeal?" In his speech before his Cambridge constituency Mr. Montagu has said: "The Government of India were parties to the Treaty of Sevres. Had the Treaty produced peace, the Government of India would have accepted it loyally; but when it showed, as I always knew that it would show, that it could not produce peace, the Government of India pleaded for its revision. Ask whether the Governments of Canada, South Africa or Australia would have remained silent when the so-called

peace was destroying the internal peace of their country?"

Poor Mr. Montagu! How easy it is, it seems, to forget that while the Government of Canada, South Africa and Australia are National Government the Government of India over which Lord Reading still presides after the dismissal of Mr. Montagu is not a national government at all. On the contrary, it is one which was bound to lock up for six long years the greatest leader that the nation had produced for many generations, in defence to pressure from the very Imperial Government that had treated its partial support of his view in this affair with such open contempt. Dr. Sapru, too, had forgotten this patent difference between India and the Dominions, and had to be reminded of it at the Imperial Conference by the representative of a country once as distressful as our own, namely Ireland. We had ourselves urged upon Mr. Montagu the very consideration to which he referred in his Cambridge speech; but it was all in vain, and our advocacy of the same cause which the late Secretary of State advocated with equally little success was punished in various ways by the Government in India. Those who used to tell me on these occasions that Mr. Montagu was sympathetic had to be reminded that his sympathy had proved wholly sterile. I have always held that Mr. Montagu should have resigned on any one of at least half a dozen occasions even before his ultimate dismissal, and now he tells us himself that: "He had been repeatedly on the verge of resignation, but he had hesitated because he did not wish to say to the Mohamedans of India that the solemn pledges which had been made to them were irretrievably lost".

Nevertheless, his resignation had to come at last, and to-day he is not only not in the Government but not even in the House of Commons. Can we then draw from all this any other conclusion than this, that "the solemn pledges which had been made to us are irretrievably lost"? But, no, they are not irretrievably lost. Friends with the assistance of God, and your whole-hearted co-operation, we will yet retrieve them, or perish in the attempt.

This was in March 1922, and although we were promised that due weight would be given to Indian opinion, I ask you to consider what was the attitude of England when six

months later the brave Turks, relying not upon the promises of Great Britain, but upon God's grace and their own self-sacrifice and courage, drove Britain's brutal nominees into the sea? You all know that better than I do, and I do not propose to detain you over that. Beaten on the field of battle, England now sought to deprive the Turks of the fruits of victory on the conference-table of diplomacy. But there, too, God helped those who helped themselves, and the Treaty of Lausanne proved that the Turks were not only warriors but statesmen as well. Let us hear what Lord Curzon has to say himself of the reasons that brought about the Treaty of Lausanne. Did the English who had commissioned Greece after the Armistice to rob the Turks of Thrace and even of their home-lands in Asia Minor; who were at one time actually considering the question of handing over Constantinople to them; and who had appealed in vain to the Dominions to fight their battle against the now victorious Turks when India could no longer be trusted to make cannon fodder of her sons after the Karachi Trial—did the English even now repent or relent? The difference between the conditions under which other treaties, including that of Sevres were imposed and those in which the Lausanne Settlement was arrived at was pointed out by Lord Curzon at the Imperial Conference in the following words:—

"Such (dictation of terms at the point of the bayonet) had been the case with all the previous post-war treaties. Those had in each case been drawn up by the victorious Powers sitting, so to speak, on the seat of judgment, in the absence of the culprit, and imposing what penalty or what settlement they chose. Only when the terms had been drawn up was the beaten enemy admitted to be told his sentence and to make the convictional protest of the doomed man. Such, indeed, was the environment in which the original Treaty of Sevres was drawn up and signed, though never ratified by the Turkish representatives. Far otherwise was it at Lausanne. There the Turks sat at the table on a footing of equality with all the other Powers. Every article of the Treaty had to be debated with and explained to them. Agreement had to be achieved not by brandishing the big stick but by discussion and compromise."

Commenting upon Lord Curzon's defence of the Treaty of Lausanne and of his praise of Allied diplomacy, which was according to him reluctant to break up the Conference on important but not vital points and to revert to a state of war, an Indian newspaper, which is not noted for an excess of sympathy with the Turks, wrote as follows :

"No credit can be given to such pacific and discreet diplomacy when it was based on unwillingness to fight. As Lord Curzon said, the Turks knew very well that the Allies had no stomach for further fighting ; on the contrary, they were very nervous about the bellicose temper of the extremist elements among the Turks. "The Allies were never certain", said the Foreign Secretary, "how far genuine desire of the leading terms for peace would control the unruly nationals and extremist elements." It will thus appear that the Turks obtained what they wanted literally at the point of the sword and the role of the conquerors and the conquered was reversed at Lausanne. It was the Turks who dictated the Terms of the Treaty, and the Allies, who dictated the terms of the other post-war treaties, had to accept them. As a matter of fact the big stick was brandished by the Turks at Lausanne and the Allies made "the conventional protest of the doomed man." Replying to the severe criticism of the Treaty by those "whose motives in making the attack are not free from criticism", he said that "it was the best treaty that could be obtained in the circumstances."

Thus it is once more clear, the Turks secured what they did at Lausanne not because of any regard on the part of England for justice to the Turks, or for their religious obligations and sentiments of Indian Musalmans with regard to the Khilafat, but in spite of England's open hostility towards the Turks and utter disregard of the requirements of Islam. Lord Curzon would have once more brandished the big stick ; but sad to relate, it had changed hands.

I have purposely dealt exclusively with a matter concerning the special interests of Musalmans and affecting their extra territorial sympathies, for it is obvious that the

Treaty of Lausanne, far from settling our national requirements common to all Indian committ ees, does not even settle the peculiarly Muslim and religious issue of the Jazirat-ul-Arab. But after all, the issue that are our common national issues far exceed in number those that concern the Musalmans alone. All that the Treaty of Lausanne has done is to declare that the Turks have not lost their Swaraj as we had done more than a century ago, and as they themselves were within an ace of doing. The Khilafat Committee's demands and in particular the religious requirements with regard to the Jazirat-ul-Arab still remain un-satisfied. But even if all this had been done, could the Musalmans give up Non-Co-operation with the Government and co-operation with other Indian communities? In the first place, that would be an unspeakably shameful breach of faith with their non-Muslim bretheren of whose help they have so willingly availed themselves, And in the next place, Indian Musalmans would be proving that, while they, were so anxious for the security of the Turks, and the Arabs Swaraj, they were indifferent to their own. Well could it then be said of them :

Hast thou arranged the affairs of the earth so well that thou meddlest in those of heaven as well ?

Friends, once more I have perhaps exhausted your ptience ; but my excuse for it is that I want the Musalmans who are being asked to-day to discard the policy of Non-Co-operation with England to confront facts before they reverse a decision to which their sad experience of co-operation with England had driven them. It is as clear as daylight that so long as India is not an equal partner with England and the Dominions in the Empire, and so long as her Government is but "a subordinate branch of the British Government six thousand miles away," we cannot be satisfied with the goodwill of the Government of India even if it is proved to the hilt. Besides loyalty to a foreign Government there are other loyalties as well, and so long as Musalmans in India are liable to be punished for disloyalty to Government because they are loyal to their God and to His Last Prophet, as we ourselves were punished at Karachi, and so long as the Holy Land of Islam is under the central of non-Muslim mandatories when we our-

selves had been given God's own mandate for it by His Last Messenger as a death-bed injunction, there is no alternative to non-violent Non-Co-Operation but one, and that, friends, is the terrible alternative of War ! Since the vast bulk of those who try to discredit our policy do so because they are slaves to the fear of Government, and being unwilling to make ANY Sacrifice could not even dream of adopting that terrible alternative let us hear no more of a change of policy !

And if we may not co-operate with Great Britain, is it expedient, to put it on the lowest place, to cease to co-operate with our non-Muslim brethern ? What is it that has happened since that staunch Hindu, Mahatma Gandhi, went to goal for advocating the cause of Islam that we must cease to co-operate with his co-religionists ? I know that Hindu Muslim relations to-day are not precisely those that they were two years ago. But is it possible for any honest and truly patriotic Indian to say that either community is wholly blameless, and that the guilty is entirely one community's ? Friends, I do not believe in diplomacy, and certainly not in that variety of it which is called secret diplomacy. I do not wish to imitate Sir Roger de Coverly, and put you off with the diplomatic dictum : "Much can be said on both sides of the questions." Most regrettable events have unfortunately occurred in Malabar, at Multan, at Agra, at Saharanpur and elsewhere, and I am prepared to support the creation of a National Tribunal to judge the respective guilt of the two communities. For it cannot be gainsaid even by the community that has suffered the most that complaints have been made by members of the other community as well, and obviously it would neither be fair nor productive of any satisfactory result if either community is saddled with all the guilt and denounced without an adequate enquiry. I did not shrink at Delhi from proposing the appointment of a truly representative Committee of Enquiry ; but for reasons which it is not necessary to state here no result has yet been achieved of such a committee's appointment. Two things are however patent. The law-courts established by Government cannot stop their work while we adjudge the guilt of the two communities. And while it is difficult to arrive



at the truth by a national enquiry after witnesses have given their testimony, true or false, on oath before the courts of law of the government, reconciliation itself, which is even more important than the investigation of the truth, is not made easy by the punishment awarded to those who are found guilty by such courts, not unoften on evidence which is not free from suspicion.

What then is to be done? I have already told you that to accept the version of one party is neither fair, nor would it help us in creating in the other party whose version was disbelieved without any enquiry a disposition towards reconciliation and reform. The only remedy that I can suggest for instant adoption is also the surest, and it was this which was all but adopted towards the end of our discussion at Delhi in the Committee appointed to consider this question. Even after we had decided that a Committee of Enquiry should visit the places where regrettable incidents had followed Hind-Muslim dissensions, and after we had even nominated the members of this Committee, we were within an ace of cancelling all this because we noted at a latter stage of our deliberations a welcome change in the attitude of the leaders on the two sides. There was now a desire to let bygones be bygones and heartily co-operate for the attainment of Swaraj, as they had been doing two years previously. Obviously the protagonists on the two sides had a glimpse of that unity of which the Mahatma was at once the chief preacher and the best symbol, and the prospect of gaining party-victories once more appeared mean and contemptible in their eyes. But a difference arose on a petty issue and they parted again. Friends, I pray that God may grant them once more a glimpse of that unity, and this time it may not be as fleeting as it had been before. Nay, I pray that they may keep ever before them a picture of that unity and the glorious vistas of that freedom which can be seen only through the avenue of national unity, so that all else that is of fair seeming, but which is associated with slavery, may lose its charm for them and be blotted out for all eternity.

Believe me, it is not by tawdry tinselled rhetoric that

I hope to settle such vital issues. But, although the issue of Hindu-Muslim unity is vital, and in fact the most vital that we have to settle, the issues which disturb that unity are contemptibly petty. Nothing makes me more ashamed than the pettiness of these issues, and I confess. I find it difficult to refute the calumny of our enemies that we are unfit for Responsible Government when I contemplate their potency for mischief side by side with their pettiness. Far be it from me to sneer at the modes of worship of my fellow-men; but I feel unspeakably depressed when I think that there are fellow-countrymen of mine, including my own co-religionists, who would jeopardise the recovery of our lost liberty, including religious liberty itself, for the sake of the satisfaction they seem to derive out of cutting a branch of Pipal tree overhanging a public thoroughfare and interfering with the passage of a pole of ridiculous length, or out of beating tom-toms and blowing trumpets before a house of worship at prayer-time while moving in a procession. Friends, if we cannot acquire a better sense of proportion let us be honest, at least with ourselves is not with others, and give up all thought of freedom. We must not talk of Swaraj even within the Empire, let alone out of it. What is Kenya to slaves like us or we to Kenya? Why need we hanker after a place in the King Emperor's place when we are not even fit for a place in his stables? And what is it to us if the Holy Land of Islam should attract many a Casino and CAFE CHANTANT, or the new warden of the Musalmans' Holy of Holies should become one of the long tale of impotent potentates maintained by an Imperial Government only to be pushed off their ancestral thrones whenever they should forget themselves and think that God has made them men and not merely puppets in an Imperial show. If ALAMS and PIPAL trees and noisy processions are our "herizon's utter sum", then all our Congress and Khilafat Committees are mere mockery.

"Let us ring down—the farce is nothing worth."

Let us close this chapter of childish make-beliefs, and taking the first train back home, let us devote ourselves henceforward to the realisation of ideal of petty self-concern

which alone benefits a nation of slaves. Let us at least not take the sacred name of Liberty in vain. Let us add our confession to the claim of our opponents, and admit that God, whom the great religious teachers of the East in which all the existing religions have had their source, had taught us to regard as just, has yet been so unjust to a fifth of mankind that he had made them totally unfit for self-rule, and has left it to his White creatures hailing from Europe to correct His mistake, and carry on for all time the administration of India. But if we do not want to drag our spiritual ancestors into the mire along with ourselves and to blaspheme a just God, let us elevate ourselves to the height of our ideals and lift the masses instead of sinking down to their low level.

But since I have referred to the low level of the masses let me say this much for them that what I wrote in 1904 in criticising the education given in the Indian universities is still true, and even to-day "the greater portion of bigotry agitates not the bosoms of the ignorant and the illiterate but excites to fury and to madness the little-learned of the land." And it is not the love of our religion that makes us quarrel with our fellow-countrymen of other faiths, but self-love and petty personal ambition. "The coming of the Mahatma" had meant the destruction of "the kingdoms of the nations" and the foundation in their place of the one united Kingdom of the Nation to be whose Chief Servant was his great glory. But these little "kings" who had lost their little "thrones" were not reconciled to the idea of national service under the banner of the Nation's Chief Servant, and were pining for restoration. So long as Mahatma Gandhi and his principal co-workers were free, they had not their courage to raise the standard of revolt and there was no room for them in economy of the Indian world except as openly despised slaves of the foreigner or as secretly discontented adherents of the National Federation. And so they chose the latter alternative. But, with the Mahatma immured at Yerrawda they reasserted themselves, and since they could not hope to occupy his position, they have persistently, though not professedly, addressed their appeals to communal passions and

jealousies in order to destroy the National Federation and hasten the recovery of their petty principalities. Before the advent of Mahatma Gandhi several streams, some large and some small, were running more or less parallel to each other, and little boats were being rowed on them. Soon after his advent, almost all of them were diverted into one channel and became tributaries of a mighty river rapidly moving on to join the sea. On the broad bosom of this Ganges there sailed a powerful ship, manned by lusty sailors, captained by the Mahatma and flying the National flag. What the petty ambitions of petty men have been urging ever since the Mahatma's incarceration is that we should scrap the big ship and take to the little row-boats again. But since these little boats are not safe enough craft for the mighty river hurrying on towards the sea, they propose a revolution in Nature itself and ask that the great river would flow back into its old tributaries. But Nature cannot be thwarted, and the futility of the desire to make the Ganges flow backwards is a thing known even to our village fools, in the name of this Congress, and of the Indian Nation, nay, even in the name of that Destiny which shapes our ends, rough-hew we may, I warn this little breed of men that God willing, they will never succeed, and that the Indian Nation cannot look upon their insidious activities with unconcern.

Friends, to punish the guilty is not without its advantages even in the domain of politics; but the surest remedy for political disunion is, as I have already suggested, to create on all sides a disposition to forget and forgive. But this is not all, and if we desire to prevent a recurrence of regrettable incidents we must remove the causes of friction. Conformity in all things is only too often desired, and this not only by the bigots, but also by some of the most large-hearted of men. Religious reformers have at all times betrayed a fatal weakness for comprehension or the preparation of a religious compound formed of many simples gathered from many different sources. They have hoped that by adopting a policy of inclusion they would be able to form a faith embracing doctrines culled from diverse faiths and acceptable to all the followers of all these faiths. That is how they hope to attain

uniformity and secure conformity. But history has shown that the cause of peace and unity has not been greatly furthered by the formation of such eclectic faiths. Only too often have they added one more to the warring creeds existing before and have only increased the disunion they were creating. Such well-intentioned failures have at last made people fall back upon toleration. This is not the indifferentism and absence of strong convictions which often pass for toleration, but a far more positive principle in life which co-exists with beliefs passionately held. I could not define it better than by quoting an American who declared to a fellow-countryman of his holding very different views to his own: "I strongly disagree with every word of what you say; but I shall fight, Sir, to the last drop of my blood for maintaining your right to say it." That, friends, is the best definition of toleration. The Quran which calls upon Musalmans even to fight in defence of their faith whenever their freedom of faith is assailed or jeopardised, sums up its teaching on tolerance in the words: "To you your faith; to me mine." If we all agreed to act upon this principle, and at the same time emphasised the features common to different faiths and the spirituality characteristic of all, there would be no strife in the world but peace and tranquility everywhere.

Let us apply this principle to some of the outstanding issues between the various communities of India. If, for instance, processions can be taken out on public roads and no objection is taken to music being played thereon, a Muslim should not object to a procession with music taken out by Hindu, or by other non-Muslim neighbours of his, unless it interferes with his own exercise of some recognised right such as conducting Divine Service in a fitting manner. If, again, a long pole can be carried in procession through the streets without danger to life and limb, no non-Muslim should object to it if it is so carried "with musical honours." But then the Muslims indulging in such practices which are, to say the least of it, of doubtful religious validity, have no right to demand that a non-Muslim neighbour of theirs should permit the lopping off of the branches of a tree which he holds sacred, whether with reasons or without it and which is growing on his land and is his property. If there is no law

against smoking in public places, no Parsi should object to a non-Parsi's lighting a cigarette in a street even though he himself holds fire to be too sacred an element to be defiled in this way. Similarly, if it is no offence to slaughter animals, and a man kills fowl, or a cow, or a pig, or kills any animal to provide food for himself or for others or for sacrificial purposes or in a particular manner not involving cruelty to animals, his neighbour should not object to it on the ground that he holds all life too sacred to be destroyed, or that he looks upon the cow as upon a mother, or that he is required by his own religion to kill animals in a different manner to his neighbour's. In all these cases it is, of course, presumed that the animal slaughtered is the property of the man who slaughters it or causes it to be slaughtered, and not his neighbour's whose property he may not unlawfully seize and use or destroy. But we have not, alas, reached a stage of toleration in India when the free exercise of his right by one of us can escape being resented by some others. In fact, the worst of it is that some of us while they insist upon the exercise of their right, sometimes exercise it with the desire to annoy their neighbours, and in a manner that is sure to annoy them. The jeering at men of other faiths when one is taking out a procession required or sanctioned by our own faith, the beating of tom-toms and playing other instruments, which often produce more noise than music, with special vigour before a house of worship of another community, and particularly when Divine Service or some other religious rite is in progress and is likely to be thereby disturbed; the needless lopping off of trees held sacred by Hindus which overhang public thoroughfares, or doing it in an exultant manner; the blowing of cigarette smoke in the face of or too close to a Parsi or Sikh; the wanton destruction of a good deal of animal life in the sight or immediate neighbourhood of Jains; carrying a garlanded cow in procession through a locality inhabited by Hindus as well for purposes of slaughter; or slaughtering it in a place where Hindus cannot help seeing it—these and many other such things that occur only too frequently whenever there is a tension of feeling between the communities concerned. And provocation and insolent exultation of the nature described above often lead to hot words,

and not seldom to blows which sometimes end in loss of human life.

There can be no measure sufficiently comprehensive to safeguard public tranquility and peace in all such cases, and I can think of no National Pact embracing all such situations, even if it is permitted to assume inordinate proportions, and to include details that must make us the laughing stock of the world. The best remedy I must repeat, is the creation of the correct spirit in which the different communities exercise their rights. But it is possible for a national body such as the Congress to deal with some of the principal causes of friction, and to remove them by bringing about the agreement between leaders of the communities concerned. And this it must do. But, while attempting to influence public opinion, and to regulate public action through the agency of such leaders, with courage and confidence, a body like the Congress must be careful not to demand from any community that it should relinquish any rights which may, in the present circumstances involve a sacrifice, far beyond its capacity. It must be remembered that Swaraj although it is our destined goal, and is soon likely to be in sight, has yet to be won, and before it is won we have no sanctions of which we can make use like a Government. We must depend exclusively upon persuasion and example. But even if we had a Government of our own, it could not rightly or even successfully compel large sections of the people to give up the exercise of any right unless it provided for them corresponding facilities in some other direction.

The question of cow-killing is an instance in point. I know how sacred a cow is in the eyes of my Hindu brothers, and who knows better than my brother and myself how anxious our absent chief was to secure its preservation? His action in so selflessly leading the Khilafat movement was no doubt characteristically generous and altruistic; but he himself used to say that he was trying to protect the cow of the Musalmans, which was their Khilafat, so that this grateful community which had learnt from its Scriptures that there could be no return for kindness save kindness, would be induced to protect his own cow in return. This was, however, only Mahatma Gandhi's way of emphasising his love

for the cow. And even before he so picturesquely called the Khilafat our cow, my brother and I had decided not to be any party to cow-killing ourselves. No beef is consumed since then in our house even by our servants, and we consider it our duty to ask our co-religionists to act similarly. As for sacrificing cows, my brother and I have never done it, but have always sacrificed goats, since a sacrifice of some such animal is a recognised religious duty. Much can be done in this way, and we have learnt by experience during the three or four years following the Hindu-Muslim **Entente** and co-operation that it is not difficult to reduce cow-sacrifice, even before Swaraj is won, to insignificant proportions.

But, much as I desire that even ordinary cow-killing throughout the year for the purpose of providing food should be altogether discontinued or, at least reduced to similarly meagre proportions, I am only too conscious of the fact that in looking forward to an early realisation of my wishes I am hoping against hope. Musalmans in India who can afford to purchase the dearer mutton; eat beef only on rare occasions. But for the poorer towns folk among the Musalmans it is the staple food. Coming from the centre of Rohilkhand, or the land of the Rohillas, I know how difficult it is for them to discontinue the use of beef in the present circumstances. The Pathan cannot suppress his surprise when he comes across people in India who "eat corn with corn;" and Rampur wags say: "Let there be meat. even if it be a dog's" When following the fashion of British Indian Municipalities Rampur also closed many meat shops and opened in their place, a Central Meat Market, it was found difficult to cope with the demand for beef, and so disastrous proved the results of a keen competition for the reduced supply that the Markeet, as it used to be called, was now descriptively rechristened **Mar peet**? In the case of this class of Musalmans the use of beef is at present a more or less acutely felt economic necessity.

The only safe and sure way of stopping cow-killing in this case is to take steps to lower the price of mutton which is prohibitively high, and thus reduce the very large margin that there is at present between the prices of mutton and beef. I am far from desiring that the cost of living



should be still further increased for any section of this impoverished land, not excluding my own community which is admittedly one of the poorest; but I cannot help pointing out that by far the most numerous owners of cows are the Hindus, and that if they did not sell cows after they had ceased to give milk, there would be much less cow-killing than there is to-day. Even now we can encourage goat and sheep breeding in order to save the cow, but when we can frame our Budgets for a Swaraj Government, it should be a comparatively easy matter to utilise a considerable portion of the savings from military expenditure for the same purpose. Nevertheless I appeal to my co-religionists even to-day to discontinue the use of beef and not to wait until Swaraj is won when their sacrifice would be worth much less. The joint-family system of India and not the free competition of the Manchester School must be our social and political ideal for India's different communities. But if there is to be competition among the communities that form the Indian joint-family, let it be a competition in forbearance and self-sacrifice, and I maintain that the community which willingly surrenders more of its cherished rights and strongly-entertained sentiments for the sake of sister communities and the peace and harmony of India will prove the most invincible in the end.

I have already explained to you what I think about the main cause of communal quarrels and the share of the educated classes in misleading the masses and using them in order to serve their personal ambitions. But matters like cow-killing and processions with music are not the only things that provide sources of friction. The adjustment of communal shares in representative institutions, local, provincial and all-India, and in the administration also, gives rise to bitter communal dissensions, and here it is clearly impossible to shift the blame on the masses. Once more personal ambitions well or ill disguised as communal interests play a great part, and specious phrases, such as greater efficiency and superior educational qualifications, are used to cover the injustice intended. This is all the more surprising because similar pretexts when put forward by the foreign bureaucrats are mercilessly exposed by the self same people. Since this

fallacy of the higher efficiency of monopolists has not yet received its quietus, I am compelled to say that the intelligence of the few can never be a proper safeguard of the interests of the many. And when people are not actuated by motives of broad-minded patriotism the superior intelligence of one group or section cannot be regarded by other groups and sections as a rather dangerous possession. It may, however, be that even where the motives are pure they are none the less suspect. That, friends, is our "karma," the legacy left by the injustice of past generations, and instead of taking under offence, we must live down such reputations. In politics as in business credit has first to be established, and a good balance-sheet and a moderately good dividend are far more useful in the long run than the most attractive prospectus. We could have gone much further on the road to Liberty and Self-Rule if minorities had been quite sure of the company which they were being invited to join. But the common platform of the Congress has now provided an excellent opportunity to all of us to prove the patriotic character of our motives, and however long it may be before we succeed in establishing our credit, nothing can be done without it; and losing our temper over unmerited suspicions, or hustling those who entertain them and trying to jockey them into an expression of confidence that they do not yet feel in us, is poor business.

The Lucknow compact which forced the hands even of the bureaucracy and compelled it to agree to such poor reforms as have been doled out to India would in all likelihood suffice for the present for such of us as have decided to enter the legislatures; and even if it does not, this should spur us on, to quicken the pace and try to reach our national destination of Swaraj all the earlier so that we may re-adjust communal shares in representative bodies. Friends, let me tell you frankly that I do not consider it likely that for sometime yet we can afford to dispense with separate electorates. But I can assure you no one would rejoice more than myself on the day that the minorities themselves announced that they needed no such protection. It may perhaps help you to judge of my bonafides in this matter if I tell you that I had strongly urged the adoption of the Indian plan for the protection

of the Christian minorities in the Eastern Vilayets of Turkey known as Armenia.

But two intermediate steps may be taken before we abolish separate electorates altogether. The first is that the minorities should be free to elect any Indian as their representatives. I shall deem it a great honour the day a non-Muslim minority elects me in preference to its own members to represent it in the national assembly. And I know of no Muslim to whom I could give my vote with greater confidence than to that great Khilafatist, Mahatma Gandhi.

Another step that we could well take would be the progressive creation of mixed electorates, gradually to replace separate electorates. Some of you may perhaps remember that I had opposed the Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali who did not wish to risk any seat by agreeing to the retention of some mixed electorates, and wanted safe, even if fewer, seats for the Musalmans when the Minto-Morley Reforms were being discussed. As inter-communal relations improved the number of seats thrown open for contest in mixed electorates may be increased and those allotted to separate electorates decreased till all come to be contested in mixed territorial electorates. The same policy should be adopted in throwing administrative posts open from communal to general competition.

All the foregoing considerations have to be kept in view in dealing with the composition of local bodies where, although the issues may often be petty, the passions of the people concerned are more liable to be excited.

A sad enough confirmation of this is furnished by the unfortunate dissensions in the Punjab over the distribution of municipal seats. The conditions in that province sometimes make me wonder whether Jallianwallah Bagh and the Crawling Lane are really situated in the Punjab.

In the short passage which I quoted in the earlier part of this address from another address of mine, delivered as long ago as in 1904, I had warned my audience against placing any reliance on the "misleading unity of opposition," and I would be the last person to believe that we can remain a united people merely by feeding on the memory of Martial Law terrors. Many a coalition formed in opposition and

adversity has broken down after the first flush of victory at the polls and in the very first days of Government, and if Swaraj is not only to be won, but also to be retained thereafter, our unity must be based on something more lasting than the memories of common suffering. And yet I am compelled to remind both Hindus and Mussalmans who complain so bitterly to-day of one another's injustice that I know of nothing more difficult for either to endure from the other than the cold-blooded decision taken by General Dyer to shoot and to shoot strong at Jallianwallah Bagh and the calculated national humiliation of the Crawling Lane. It seems to me that we in the north suffer from a mental myopia, and as we move forward our sufferings are left behind and gradually recede into obscurity, so that even at a very short distance of time the troubles of to-day blot out all recollection of the terrors of yesterday. And what is worse, each community remembers only that which it has itself suffered retaining in its memory no record of the sufferings it had itself caused to others.

But in the referring thus to communities we are apt to forget that it is not communities that cause suffering to other communities in the course of popular affrays, but rowdy elements of India's population which cause injury to the peace-loving communities. The **Badmashes** belong to no community but form a distant community of their own and to it all is grist that comes to the mill. I was greatly impressed by an article contributed by Lala Lajpatrai from his American exile during the war when Hindu monied classes had suffered greatly in some districts of the Punjab from the depredations of Muslim **Badmashes**. There was great danger of inter-communal strife, but the Lalaji hastened to point out that the Hindu sufferers had not suffered because they were Hindus, but because they belonged to the monied classes. It was case of the Haves and the Have-nots and not a case of the Hindus and the Musalmans. This has always to be borne in mind, particularly when there are not only the two contending parties but a third as well, which laughs just as heartily as we fight and abuse one another. Dr. Tagore has spoken a great deal since the outbreak of rowdyism in the north on the subject of inter-communal quarrels; but the reports of his

lectures made me doubt a little whether he remembered what he wrote on the same subject when similar rowdyism, but more deliberate and previously planned, had broken out over cow-killing in Bihar in 1917. He happened to be travelling in a compartment shared with him by a British military officer who sneered at Indian aspirations and asked the Poet how his fellow-countrymen could talk of Swaraj when he a foreigner had to be called in every now and then to take his troops to the disturbed areas and keep the peace between Indians of different faiths. Then, at least, the Poet remembered that there was a third who laughed while we suffered, and reminded the British officer of his existence. The latter asked whether there were no such quarrels before the advent of the British and the Poet admitted their previous existence as well but he was then prompt to point out that there was one difference. They quarrelled even then but they did not let many suns go down upon their wrath because the moment they recovered their lost tempers they also recollected that they had to live together for better for worse and since life would be infinitely dull without more or less friendly intercourse, the sooner they made up their differences and became friends again the better. But ever since the *Tortius Gaudens* had come on the scene such quarrels had become more frequent and such reconciliations fewer and farther between.

European husbands and Indian wives have a horror of that triangular family life in which the third side is represented by the mother-in-law. Imagine then the blessed state of that union in which the mother-in-law is not only a permanent feature of my life, but in which she alone runs the household. And worse than all, the mother-in-law that makes each of us pine for single blessedness combines two distinct natures in one person, and with ever ready sympathy consoles either party, as the occasion demands, and better still, condemns the other, in the joint foe of the mother of both! This would indeed be matter for laughter if we had only sense enough not to be the dupes of this double-dealing mother-in-law. But the moment a cow is killed by a Musalman in a provocative manner, or a noisy procession is taken out by a Hindu in front of a mosque where prayer may be going on, we are ready to rush at one another's throats forgetting that Musalmans

have never been known to be wanting when it was their own co-religionists that had to be denounced to the Government as seditionists and rebels, and that Hindus have had no better record of communal cohesion in similar circumstances. Our own sufferings have taught us that there is never a lack of one's co-religionists to do all the dirty work that may be required of them, and when a Musalman is so ready to hurt a brother Muslim, or, for that matter, the entire Muslim community, why need we be surprised if a Hindu is employed to do the same? No, friends, like **Badmashes**, traitors belong to no community, but form a tribe of their own. Some of you must have read Labour's denunciation of "International Finance." We have even better reason to denounce of "Inter-Communal Goondaism." A Musalman may throw beef during the night into a temple or break an idol, and yet the Muslim community may be just as innocent of this provoking sacrilege as the Hindu community itself; and in similar circumstances the Hindu community may be blameless even though a Hindu may throw a park into mosque or desecrated the Holy Quran.

But even more clear than this is the case of a Muslim Minister who may have shown favouritism towards Musalman in the matter of patronage, and of a Hindu Minister similarly showing undue favour to Hindus. Obviously they are members of a foreign Government whatever caste-mark they may bear. The hands are the hands of Esau, but the voice is the voice of Jacob. And yet the people of a province that has still to stop the pensions of a Dyer and an O'Dwyer are prepared to co-operate with those who insist on paying for Indian murder out of Indian funds, and to cease to co-operate with their neighbours and fellow-sufferers, only because a minister who happens to belong to the community of latter dispenses such petty patronage as the Reforms empower him to do in a manner that does not meet with their approval. After this one wonders what non-co-operation means. When the Congress publicly is welcoming Indians who resign their posts, even though it thinks it is perhaps too much just yet to call upon them to resign, there are people who call themselves Congressmen but forget all that Mahatma Gandhi had taught them of non-co-operation only because a minister in their

province is giving a few more petty posts to members of his own community than they think he ought to do. Friends, it is not a little embarrassing to me that this minister happens to be a co-religionist of mine; but believe me, I would have felt even more ashamed than I now feel embarrassed if the complaint about such petty posts had come from my co-religionists Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb for whose speedy and complete recovery we all pray, has related to me what unspeakable shame he felt when co-religionists of his and mine had the hardihood to show some scratches on the walls of the mosques at Multan and some broken pitchers in justification of their counter-claim that if Hindu temples had been destroyed their own mosques did not altogether escape.

Let me add that I would never have mentioned this had I wanted to complain about the Hindu attitude in the matter, I have done so because I feel certain that the Muslim mentality does not seem to be any better, and neither community is above these petty considerations. But even if the Muslims had been any better I would not have complained of the Hindus, for experience teaches us that it serves no purpose for a member of one community to rebuke the members of another. That task must be left to its own members. How often have we not seen little children living in the same quarter of a town playing together and then quarrelling over little things? Every body rushes back to his own mother with a woeful tale of the wickedness of his playmates, and, of course, an equally pathetic description of his own virtues. The wise mother uniformly decides against her own child and rebukes him; and if he still persists in his complaint, he is told not to make such unsociable creatures his playmates any more. The street which is usually the common playground is thence forward declared beyond the bounds. But solitude soon begins to pall upon our virtuous young friend, and a little separation begins to purge his playmates of all their sins so that by the second or third day they are completely absolved, and he asks for, and secures, his mother's permission to play with them once again with the tale of his undeserved sufferings. And this is the way that peace is secured. But, alas, I have seen foolish mothers as well as wise ones, and perhaps the former constitute a majority. The

moment their young hopeful comes to them for sympathy and, even worse, for effective support, they shed motherly tears of deep anguish over him, and when they have exhausted one emotion they make use of another, and, going to the mother of the wicked boy who had been so unjust to their little angel, bitterly complain of him and drop not a few hints that his upbringing has evidently been neglected. This leads to still plainer hints from the other side that the complainant was a devil incarnate, and that with such parents to bring him up it was not altogether the poor creature's fault. And then the fray begins. The big guns of abuse are sent up at a gallop, and long range howitzers which leave none scot-free up to the seventh generation are brought into action. Then appears the male auxiliary and if he is equally devoid of common sense and equally jealous of his **Izzat** he opens fire instantly with something that shatters the **Izzat** of the adversary for ever. Thus when the other male auxiliary rushes up to the scene of action on hearing the noise of this bombardment, he calls a truce to this wordy warfare, and like the practical creature that he is, he promptly breaks the head of the other male. And it is a lucky quarter of the town if hostilities remain confined to the families directly concerned. The best commentary on all this is furnished by the action of the brace of young barbarians with whom hostilities had commenced walking off arm-in-arm to enjoy another game of 'gilli-danda' or "kabaddi" just as police may be marching the Big Four off to the lock-up.

It is such experiences as these which have taught us that the best method of setting inter-communal quarrels is neither to advocate the cause of your community, as in my time I have often done, nor even to pose as an arbitrator with an open and a judicious mind, but to earn the abuse of your own community. And since my brother and I have received an earnest of this already, I feel satisfied that not only am I qualifying myself for the office of a genuine patriot, but that I may begin to entertain hopes that the two communities will soon be reconciled. After this, need I say I recommend this course of political exercises to all my friends of every community?

Having explained my own attitude at such length I do not think I am called upon to say much about the Sanghatan.



I have certainly never publicly opposed it, and if anyone thinks so he is mistaken, and must have been misled by some ill-reported speech or interview. This is entirely an affair of my Hindu brethren, and if they think they need a Sanghatan they should be allowed a perfectly free hand in the matter. Every community is entitled to undertake such social reform as it needs, and if the Sanghatan is organised to remove untouchability and to provide for the speedy assimilation of the Antyaj and their complete absorption into Hindu Society, I must rejoice at it both as a Musalman and as a Congressman. Ever since the Congress at Nagpur called upon the Hindu delegates "to make a special effort to rid Hinduism of the reproach of untouchability" and "respectfully urged the religious heads to help the growing desire to reform Hinduism in the matter of its treatment of the suppressed classes," this question has enlisted the direct interest and sympathy of the Congress. I remember very well that towards the closing months of the year 1921 Mahatma Gandhi was making the removal of untouchability the test of the Hindus, yearning for Sawarj, and if orthodox Hindu religious bodies have now seriously decided to make the required reform in Hinduism it is bound to rejoice the hearts of that large-hearted Hindu and of all his followers.

But I cannot help recalling that this matter remained in abeyance a considerable time, and that it was not taken up with any great zeal until after the tragic events in Malabar had casued some months later a wave of indignation and resentment to sweep over the distant Punjab, and Multan Hindus had themselves suffered from the unruly passions of the mob. It is this combination of circumstances which causes uneasiness to many of those who yearn for the unification of India and know how little weight our recently achieved unity can just yet sustain. A broken limb which has just come out of a steel frame should not be too severely strained. We may not believe every suspicion or rumour, but we must not overlook their potency for mischief if they are not quickly removed or disproved; and there is no doubt that people are busy creating the suspicion that the removal of untouchability is not intended to result in the absorption

of the suppressed classes into Hindu society, but merely to use them as auxiliaries on the Hindu side in future affrays. This being so, I ask if there is no ground for the uneasiness of Mahatma Gandhi's followers who have been sedulously taught, in the word of our resolution at Nagpur, "to lay special emphasis on **non-violence** being an integral part of the Non-Co-operation Resolution," "and to invite the attention of the people to the fact that "**non-violence** in word and deed is as essential between the people themselves as in respect of the Government," and finally, that "the spirit of violence is not only contrary to the growth of a true spirit of democracy, but actually retards the enforcement (if necessary) of the other stages of non-co-operation." If in removing the reproach of untouchability we give cause to the world to reproach us with adding to pre-existing violence, will it not sadden the heart of the Mahatma? Friends, let us befriend the suppressed classes for their own injured sakes and not for the sake of injuring others or even avenging our own injuries.

Another feature of the Sanghatan movement is the increase of interest in physical culture. This is all to the good, and if flabbiness and cowardice can be moved from any section of the Indian people their is cause only for joy. Here, too, however there arises the question of the spirit and I am sincerely glad that the frank discussions at Delhi last September gave an opportunity to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya to proclaim to the world that he himself favours the creation of common **Akhadas** in which young men of all communities can take their shares. As for the protection of life and property I regret that I should have to add the honour of our sisters, he again proclaimed his original intention that common territorial Civic Guards should be formed it was only because he was told that the Hindu Sabha by which his motion was being discussed could not constitutionally bind other communities that he altered his resolution and agreed to the creation of Hindu Guards.

But in entire agreement with Hindu leaders the Hindu-Muslim Unity Committee recommended certain resolutions

to the Congress for adoption on all these subjects and since they were immediately passed by the Congress let us now see that we give full effect to them. To prevent the possibility of disunion we have, in the first place, to establish at the headquarters of every district under the supervision of the District Congress Committees, and in consultation with Khilafat Committees, Hindu Sabhas and other responsible local associations, mixed Committees for the maintenance of peace and security throughout the districts. In case of any incident likely to disturb such peace and security, they would endeavour to minimise its evil consequences and provide for a speedy and satisfactory settlement, and would encourage the people, in case of any provocation, to conduct themselves with restraint, and to refer the matter to such Committees for redress of their grievances, instead of themselves, resorting to retaliatory measures. I have since then realised with grief and pain, that in some district, Congress Committees have ceased to function, and that Congress workers have in some cases themselves taken a leading part in exciting inter-communal hostility. This would necessitate for sometime at least the formation of supervisory bodies to check the work of the District Committees and to be a substitute for them in areas in which Committees have not been formed. A permanent Provincial and similar National Conciliation Board also seem to me to be called for, and had such Boards been in existence perhaps they could have averted unfortunate collisions in some localities. These Boards could perhaps be utilised also for making enquiries into similar incidents that occur in spite of all our precautions, and if necessary, to apportion the guilt between the communities concerned. Let us be ready with our machinery, and if the people know that we mean to stamp out such rowdyism and to maintain peace security and inter-communal friendship, there is little likelihood of our having to sit in judgment upon contending communities.

In the next place the Congress resolved at Delhi that its local Committees be instructed to form and maintain, under their own supervision and control, local Corps of Civic

Guards (open to all communities) throughout the country, for the maintenance of peace and order and for the performance of other civic duties. Local Committees of the Congress were also to be instructed to induce and encourage the people to take up physical culture and to provide necessary facilities for this purpose so that our people may be enabled to undertake their self-defence. I have heard of communal **Dals** and **Akhadas**, but I fear the local Committees have not yet had sufficient time to organise Congress Corps of Civic Guards and open Congress Akhadas. I however, know of one School of Physical Culture at Ajmer which sent some of its members to Delhi Congress, and while pleased with their physical development I rejoiced still more when I learnt that, in spite of much persuasion to throw in their lot with their community during the unfortunate affray there and indulge in partisan violence, these young men remained wholly non-violent and refused to take sides. Can anyone say after this that the Congress exercises no influence? Wherever we have men like our Arjunlal Sethiji, Maulana Moin-ud-din and Mirza Abdul Qadir Beg we may confidently look forward to the maintenance, or at least, the earliest possible restoration, of peace. Dr Hardikar has, I am happy to say, interested himself in the creation of Volunteer Corps, let me confess, friends, that even to-day when I am presiding over the Congress I feel I would be more in my element if I were working in Dr. Hardikar's place. If only the Government knew how necessary is the formation of volunteer corps of Civic Guards to keep our crowds even more peaceful than they already are and far more orderly and self-restrained, it would not dream of using its Criminal Law Amendment Act against them and their organisers, provided, of course, it too desired peace and order to prevail in the land. In this matter I have a personal end to serve also Travelling as constantly as I do, and attending mass meeting by the dozen, and being unfortunately only too often carried in processions, I feel the need of such Corps more than the stay-at-homes among us, and I am often tempted to take in hand the local volunteers attending on such occasions,\* forgetting

for the moment that no man can attend at his own funeral.

But let me say one word on the subject of the protection of the honour of our women before I take leave of the Sanghatan question, and let me preface my last word on the subject with the admission that it is not really mine but my wife's. At Almora, where she was addressing a ladies' meeting composed mainly of her Hindu sisters, she said that if in a place such as Almora, where Musalmans form a very insignificant minority, she found that an anti-Muslim riot had broken out, and her male relations were not available to help her to protect her own or her daughter's honour, she would unhesitatingly appeal to the first Hindu as to a brother even if she knew him to be a badmash and ask him to take her and her children under his personal protection. She said she had enough confidence in the sense of honour even of India's badmashes and in their "sportsmanship" so to speak, and I doubt if there are many badmashes in India on whom such a personal appeal of a sister in distress will fail to have any effect. Friends, trust disarms even wickedness and succeeds where six-chambered revolvers fail and Shakespeare knew human nature better than some of us seem to do when he wrote :

"There is a soul of goodness in things evil."

I cannot do better than to appeal to my sisters to teach us to trust each other more than we do at present, and by their own courageous confidence develop in the worst of us that God-given "soul of goodness."

Another movement that has affected Hindu-Muslim relations is Shuddhi. I myself believe in a missionary religion, and by a missionary religion should be taken to mean one in which, in the words of Professor Max Muller, the spreading of the truth and the conversion of unbelievers are raised to the rank of a sacred duty. It is the spirit of truth in the hearts of believers which cannot rest unless it manifests itself in thought, word and deed, which is not satisfied till it has carried its message to every human soul, till what it believes to be the truth is accepted as the truth by all the members of the human family. Christianity and Buddhism as well as Islam are known to be missionary religions, but Judaism,

Zoroastrianism and Hinduism are generally regarded as non-missionary.

Now, this has been my complaint for a long time against Hinduism, and on one occasion, lecturing at Allahabad in 1907, I had pointed out the contrast between Musalman and Hindu by saying that the worst that could be said of a Muslim was that he had a tasteless mess which he called a dish fit for kings, and wanted all to share it with him, thrusting it down the throats of such as did not relish it and would rather not have it, while his brother who prided himself on his cookery, retired into the privacy of his kitchen and greedily devoured all that he had cooked, without permitting even the shadow of his brother to fall on his food, or sparing even a crumb for him. This was said not altogether in levity; and, in fact, I once asked Mahatma Gandhi to justify this feature of his faith to me. It will be strange, then, if to-day, when there are evidences of a missionary zeal in the activities of my Hindu brethren, I should resent their efforts in spreading their faith. More than that, if the Malkana Rajputs are in reality so unfamiliar with Islam as to be taken for Hindus, Musalmans must thank Hindu missionaries for so forcibly reminding them of their own duty to look to the condition of millions of Musalmans whose knowledge of Islam is as defective as their practice of its rites is slack.

Both communities must be free to preach as well as practice the tenets of their respective faiths. There are competing types of culture in the world, each instinct with the spirit of propagandism, and I hope we live in an age of conscious selection as between ideal systems. We cannot surely wish to practice that wasteful, and at best, a precarious, elimination of "false doctrine" by actual destruction of those who hold it, I hope the age of the Spanish Inquisition has gone for ever, and no one would think of abolishing heresy by wiping out the heretic. Progress is now possible along the more direct and less painful path of conversion. But it must be the result of the exercise of the power of rational choice, and the man whose conversion we seek must be free to choose his faith. What true Muslim could be satisfied by the kind of "conversion" which some fanatical Moplahs are believed to have effected during the period of the Malabar

troubles by forcibly depriving some Nairs of their tufts of hair indicating their Hindu faith? No better in the sight of God is that outward conformity which is forced upon a person by bringing undue worldly pressure to bear upon him.

Allegations of such pressure by Zamindars and money-lenders and by a numerical majority of neighbours in the surrounding area have been made and denied, and counter-allegations have been made. This cannot but react unfavourably on national unity; and when over a very small matter the decision to put a stop to all demonstrative and inflammatory methods of mass conversion and reclamation was given up, the Hindu-Muslim Unity Committee at Delhi recommended to the Congress a resolution which was duly adopted, that a Committee be formed to enquire into incidents connected with "Shuddhi" and "Anti-Shuddhi" movements, to visit places wherever coercion, intimidation, exercise of undue pressure or influence, or use of methods of proselytisation inconsistent with such a religious object is alleged or suspected, and to recommend such means as it thinks necessary for the prevention of such practices. Every political party in the West is or at least, pretends to be jealous of its honour, and willingly consents to have a Corrupt Practices Act passed by the Legislature. We who pride ourselves on our greater spirituality must be truly jealous of our reputations, and a national body like the Congress is a proper authority to advise all committees in this matter, if not to enforce a Corrupt Practices Act as a part of the unwritten law of the nation. My own belief is that both sides are working with an eye much more on the next decennial Census than on heaven itself, and I frankly confess it is on such occasions that I sigh for the days when our forefathers settled things by cutting heads rather than counting them.

The quarrels about **Alams** and **Pipal** trees and musical processions are truly childish; but there is one question which can easily furnish a ground for complaint if unfriendly action if communal activities are not amicably adjusted. This is the question of the conversion of the Suppressed Classes if Hindu society does not speedily absorb them. The Christian missionary is already busy and

no one quarrels with him. But the moment some Muslim Missionary Society is organised for the same purpose there is every likelihood of an outcry in the Hindu Press. It has been suggested to me by an influential and wealthy gentleman who is able to organise a Missionary Society on a large scale for the conversion of the Suppressed Classes, that it should be possible to reach a settlement with leading Hindu gentlemen and divide the country into separate areas where Hindu and Muslim Missionaries could respectively work, each community preparing for each year, on longer unit of time if necessary an estimate of the numbers it is prepared to absorb or convert. Those estimates would of course be based on the number of worker and funds each had to spare, and tested by the actual figures of the previous period. In this way each community would be free to do the work of absorption and conversion, or rather, of reform without chances of collision with one another. I cannot say in what light my Hindu brethren will take it and I place this suggestion tentatively in all frankness and sincerity before them. All that I say for myself is that I have seen the condition of the 'Kali Paraj' in the Baroda State and of the Gonds in the Central Provinces and I frankly confess it is reproach to us all. If the Hindus will not absorb them into their own society, others will and must, and then the orthodox Hindu too will cease to treat them as untouchables. Conversion seems to transmute them by a strong alchemy. But does this not place a premium upon conversion ?

Once more the best and surest remedy is a change in the spirit of proselytisation ; but that cannot be expected with a Press so unrestrainedly partisan as we have to-day in parts of India. I am myself a journalist, and you all know that I have undergone some little suffering for the sake of securing the freedom of the Indian Press. At last I can claim the honour, if honour it be, to have figured in the leading case under the late lamentable Press Act, and it was I who started this fox even if I could not be at the kill. The removal of these external fetters makes it all the more necessary that we should exercise



greater restraint than before over ourselves. But what I have seen of the Vernacular Press in the Punjab makes me apprehend that if it is not checked by the combined efforts of all Congressmen it will make us sigh for the resurrection of that dead and damned piece of bureaucratic legislation. Not that the bureaucracy would find much in our Punjab papers to which it would be inclined to apply the provisions of the Press Act even if it were resurrected, for in the estimation of the bureaucrat the offence punishable under section 153-A of the Indian Penal Code is not to be named in the same breath with that punishable under section 124-A of that Code. And even though the Press Act is no more, the Penal Code and the Civil Courts, where damages can be claimed by officials financed by the Government for alleged defamation, serve the Government well enough. But the nation remains wholly unprotected, and it is up to us not to leave it so exposed. It was I who strongly urged the Hindu-Muslim Unity Committee last September to recommend to the Congress a resolution on the subject of the Press. The Congress was asked to instruct its Working Committee to issue a manifesto inviting the attention of the Indian newspapers to the extreme necessity of exercising great restraint when dealing with matters likely to affect inter-communal relations, and also in reporting events and incidents relating to inter-communal dissensions and in commenting upon them. It was asked to appeal to them not to adopt an attitude which might prove detrimental to the best interests of India and which might embitter the relations between different communities. It was also recommended to the Congress that its working Committee might be instructed to appoint in each province a small Committee which should request such newspapers as publish any matter likely to create inter-communal dissensions that they should desist from following such a course of action, and that if in spite of its friendly advice, no useful results were achieved these Committees should proclaim such newspapers. If even after this they did not alter their attitude, a boycott of them by Congressmen was to be declared in the last resort. The Congress adopted this resolution also,

but I fear its executive has not yet had time to carry out the instructions issued by the Congress. The most important work that we have to do apart from this, of restoring Hindu-Muslim unity, is to organise an adequate permanent establishment for the Congress and its Provincial and Local Committees, for it is no use passing Resolutions in the Congress which cannot be attended to by the honorary executive for lack of a paid, permanent establishment.

Friends, you may perhaps say I have taken up too much of your time in describing and detailing what the Congress did at Delhi and have hardly any proposals to place before you to-day. My answer is that you need few fresh proposals if you are determined to carry out those which you have already accepted. At Delhi we were able to proclaim to the world that we were not satisfied with the existing state of affairs and that we were resolved to remain united. That itself cleared the air to a great extent; but this was not all. We had provided remedies essentially sound in principle for our national ills; only we have not so far had time to use them. We spent perhaps too much time in examining, analysing and criticising the resolutions we had passed at Delhi, and a large section of Congressmen has been kept busy by the elections. Unless you adopt other measures to restore the national unity, it will be the duty of your executive to carry out the measures already adopted. But your executive will fail to accomplish anything of lasting value unless it has your own ungrudging support and active assistance. In fact, you are your own most effective executive, and as your servant specially nominated by you for the year that is now commencing, I appeal to you to assist me in carrying out your own orders.

To the Indian Press I would address my most earnest appeal urging the Press to rise to the height of the occasion and not to disappoint the high expectations of one who is himself a journalist. When I was recently at Bijapur again and for the first time visited its famous dome, a friend who was as deeply impressed as myself by that wonderful pile, asked me in a whisper right across the dome if

Europe with all its boast of superiority had a whispering gallery such as that of the Gol 'Gunbad'. It is no doubt a most astonishing experience to be able to hear distinctly across such a great space everything that is whispered and the nine echoes heard in that gallery are equally remarkable. My friend was for moment living the brilliant past of Bijapur over again and felt inordinate pride in the achievements of his Muslim ancestors. It was no doubt a great shock to him when I whispered back that the Whispering Gallery of Europe was even more marvellous. And then I told him that Europe's Whispering Gallery was the Press, its Fourth Estate! Every lie softly whispered in the privacy of the Editor-Proprietor's sanctum was shouted across all the continents, increasing in pitch and volume with every reverberation till it ended in the united shriek of hundreds of millions, leaving no chance for poor tongue-tied Truth to be heard. And yet it is just as easy to make the world resound with the thunder peals of Truth as with the shrieks of Falsehood, and it is for the Indian Press to choose whether it will serve as the Whispering Gallery of Truth or of Falsehood.

Before I take final leave of the Hindu-Muslim question I wish to declare that if Indian wins Swaraj it will satisfy all the religious requirements of a Muslim in India. Swaraj, Sarv-Raj, or the Raj of all, implies Swadharama and must imply that in an Eastern country. It is not, therefore necessary that a Musalman should sit on the throne of the Mughals at Delhi, and we have all seen how the greatest Muslim State has ceased to have a Royal Throne and has converted itself into a Republic. Every true Muslim looks back with pride upon the Thirty years of the Truly Guided Khalifas during which the Successors of the Prophet and the Commanders of the Faithful (with whom Allah was pleased) were the Chief Servants of the Commonwealth. Islam spread over the major portion of the civilised world and its empire extended over all the continents of the known world; but no Muslim holds dear the memory of Islam's later conquests and expansion as that of the first thirty years when it was the pride of the Muslim envoy to tell the envoys of the Byzantine

and Iranian empires who had been boasting of the despotic power of their respective rulers that the Muslims had themselves appointed their ruler and would depose him just as readily if he acted against the Law of God. Victory has not been snatched from the jaws of defeat and despair by the valiant and God-fearing Turks to the purpose, and I feel confident that once they are free from the distractions inevitable after the victories both of war and peace they will revive with God's assistance the glories not of the Omayyide or Abbaside Empire, but of the first Thirty years of the Khilafat before there were any kings or dynasties

I have my own views of the possible adjustment of the relations of all Muslim States and the Khalifa, but this is not the occasion to state them. It would suffice if I state here that Musalmans can satisfy all their religious requirements no matter who is their secular sovereign so long as they recognise that "there is no governance but God's", and that "Him alone are we commanded to serve." As in every religion there are in Islam certain things which every Musalman is required to do, and certain things which he is required not to do. Between these duties and prohibitions lies a vast stretch of ground in which he is free to roam about except for certain things which are in the nature of preferences. Now a Musalman can obey no creature of God who commands him to neglect one of these duties or to disregard one of these prohibitions, and it makes no difference whether that person is one of his own parents or his master or ruler, whether he is an enemy or a friend, or whether he is a Muslim or a non-Muslim. So long as the temporal power of Islam is adequate and is always at the disposal of the Khalifa, it matters little whether a Muslim is a subject of a Muslim or of a non-Muslim. All he needs is the fullest freedom to obey none but God in the matter of his religious duties and prohibitions. Even if a Muslim sovereign, nay even if the Khalifa himself, command him to disobey God, he must refuse; and it is obvious that he could not render unto a non-Muslim Caesar what he could not render unto a Muslim Caesar, because it was due only to God. This being so,

I cannot understand why there need be any question of a Muslim's unflinching loyalty to a Swaraj and Swadharma Government.

As for the bogey of His Majesty the Ameer of Afghanistan attacking India with the assistance of Indian Muslims it is the creation of fear and cowardice, and can only be laid at rest by courage and self-confidence. I must say it did my heart good to hear my esteemed friend Pandit Jawaharlal say, "Let us win Swaraj and we shall see who comes." We shall certainly be ready to meet all comers, and it will be no easy matter to snatch away Freedom from the hands that have succeeded in winning it back after a century and a half of slavery. As for myself, if India ever needs a humble soldier to resist an aggressor, be he the Muslim or non-Muslim, your comrade whom you have to-day called out of the ranks will gladly fill his place in the ranks. He certainly will be no deserter.

I have heard that my Madras speech of 1921, which had been considered in official circles to be highly treasonable, although it embodied nothing more or less than the sentiments my brother and I had expressed in a letter we had addressed from the Butul goal to the Viceroy, had not found much favour even in Afghanistan. And I do not wonder that our Afghan neighbours feel a little hurt when they are so often described as if they were harbouring designs on India. If only we knew how difficult His Majesty the Ameer must be finding the task of organising his kingdom and developing its resources without the assistance of foreign personnel, we would not talk of the possibility of an Afghan aggression. Afghanistan is enough to keep him and his Government fully occupied without the additional worry of the problem of how a Kabul pony can swallow an Indian elephant. If the Afghans are hurt merely because I explained my position in the event of a hypothetical aggression from Afghanistan, what must be my own feelings in having to explain that position? Because I am a Muslim I have not ceased to be an Indian, and it is surely humiliating to any Indian's national pride to think that his fellow-

countrymen regard his country and theirs as an easy prey for any foreign assailant, no matter how weak.

Friends, you will forgive me if I relate a story here which seems so applicable to our own situation. I have to preface it with a special apology to my Banya friends because, whosoever may have been the author of the story, he had certainly lived in an age much anterior to ours when the most courageous leader that Indian has known in recent times happens to be no other than a Banya as I call my dear friend Seth Jamnalal Bajaj. The story is that four travellers happened to meet each other on the road and agreed to travel together for safety's sake. It happened that after dusk they were met by some highwaymen who demanded the surrender of all their belongings. Then they discovered that their assailants were also only four. One of the travellers who was a Rajput whispered to his companion who was a Pathan that he could successfully tackle the biggest of the highwaymen. Thereupon the Pathan assured the Rajput that, for his part, he too could manage to deal with the next biggest. Thus encouraged the third of the travellers who was a middle-aged Brahmin said: "And I could knock down the third." Then came the turn of the fourth who was a Banya, and equally promptly came his declaration: And the fourth would knock me down! This led the Brahmin to apprehend that in that case he might be required to tackle not one but two, and he decided to give in. The Pathan too gave it in for fear he might have to deal with three assailants, and finally the Rajput also surrendered because obviously he was no match for all the four. And all this because one traveller out of the four had felt just as convinced that the fourth highwayman would knock him down as his three companions were convinced that they could knock down one highwayman a piece!

May I not ask you, friends, if it is not now time when we have a Banya for our brave leader for all of us to give up such conviction of defeat before the battle is joined? Why, only recently a Delhi paper published the remarkable discovery of its secret investigator that a

Delegation consisting of two aged Arabs and one young one who have come from Palestine with the permission of the Government to raise fund from Indian Musalmans for the repair of the Masjid-ul-Aqsa and the Qubbat-us-Sakhra at Jerusalem is the vanguard of an invading force of Arabs! Not with such fears and suspicions and tremors can Freedom be won? This, friends, is the way to lose even little we have. It reminds me of the curse of the Lord on Israel which is recorded in Deuteronomy :

"The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed and thou perish quickly.

The Lord shall curse thee to be smitten before thine enemies, thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them ; and shalt be removed into all the Kingdoms of the earth.

And thy carcase shall be meat unto all the fowls of the air, and unto beasts of the earth and no man shall try them away.

The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness and astonishment of heart :

And thou shalt grope at noon-day as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways ; and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee.

Thou shalt build a house, and thou shalt not dwell therein, thou shalt plant a vineyard and thou shalt not gather thereof.

Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look and tail with longing for them all the day long ; and there shall be no might in thine hand.

The fruit of thine land all thy labours shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up ; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always.

So that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee.

The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high ; and thou shalt come down very low.

He shall lend to thee and thou shalt not lend to him ; he shall be the head and thou shalt be the tail.

Moreover all these curse shall come upon thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed.

And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder and upon thy seat for ever."

The duty of the Musalmans to-day is a double one. They owe a duty to themselves as Indians to secure freedom for themselves and for their posterity. India is no less their country than the Hindus and even if the Hindus were to shrink from the sacrifices required in Freedom's battle, though they will certainly never do so, it would still be their duty to persevere and to say that they would win Swaraj for all India. But as Musalmans too they are to secure Swaraj for their country. When I met the Turks in Switzerland and in Rome they wondered how the same country that had despatched a large army, which included so considerable a proportion of Musalmans, to fight against them could also send a delegation like our to plead for better terms for them after their defeat. When I solve this riddle for them by explaining the paradox that many of the Muslim warriors that were not afraid of the Turkish sword or the German gun and could pass months and years in those death-traps called trenches, were yet afraid of the policeman's truncheon and of police look-ups and prison cells, my Turkish friends told me that in that case I must take the first boat back to India, and instead of endeavouring to prevent their enslavement, I should go and break the fetters of my own countrymen. "We have beaten the English", they said, "on the soil of Turkey and in the Straits ; but we could not keep at bay for ever your Indian hordes that pressed us hard in Palestine and in Mesopotamia. Once you are free and no Indian Muslim can any longer be driven to fight against the forces of the Khalifa. Both Turkey and Islam will be safe. It is your duty to us as well to yourselves that you first win freedom in your own country." But they added, "let not your Hindu and Sikh-



fellow-countrymen think that they owe a duty only to themselves and none to us. It is in order to keep them enslaved that Britain has forged such heavy chains for us."

Friends, I am glad to hear that so many of my Hindu fellow-workers are thinking of establishing a relationship with other Eastern countries. Their political ideas have scaled the ramparts of the Himalayas and crossed the moat of the surrounding seas. They recognise that the freedom of every Asiatic nation helps their own freedom, and they contemplate the organisation of an Eastern Federation. The first step had already been taken by Mahatma Gandhi when at Amritsar he identified himself with the cause of the Khilafat. It would be a strange thing if while the Hindus set about organising an Eastern Federation, Indian Musalmans should cease to co-operate with them all because one newspaper correspondent realised in the suffering of the Musalmans at Saharanpur the tragic scenes enacted at Smyrna. Nothing could be more foolish and more absurd than this, and if the Turks ever came to hear of this comparison they would not feel an excess of gratitude for us.

But one question and one only I shall ask those who point to the episode of Saharanpur where no doubt it is the Hindus that have suffered most as a sufficient reason to veer round from non-Co-operation to co-operation. And that question is this. Was there no British Government ruling in India when Musalmans had to undergo such unmerited sufferings? Was a Hindu administering the district or even a Non-Co-operating Muslim? Finally, was not the department of justice administered by a Musalman who had broken away from the community of which he used to be a great leader at one time and had co-operated with the foreign Government? These are not three separate questions, but one viz, if neither the Government nor those Musalmans who co-operate with it were able to save the Musalmans of Saharanpur, what prospect is there of any greater safety for them if these conditions are perpetuated by our co-operation? I pause for an answer, but I fear I shall not get it.

In the meantime the Holy Land of Islam remains in

the custody of non-Muslim mandatories. Five times a day every Musalman who offers his daily prayers with regularity turns his face towards the Ka'ba. While I was still in the Bijapur gaol a question occurred to me which I put into verse, and it still remains unanswered :

"His Ka'ba facing which we were daily offering prayers, what shall we say to Him how it was left under the enemy's control?"

Friends, I have said all that I could say on the Hindu-Muslim question and if after all this lengthy dissertation I leave any Hindu or Musalman still unconvinced of the necessity of co-operation among ourselves and Non-Co-operation with our foreign master, I can say no more and must acknowledge myself beaten. One thing is certain, and it is this, that neither can the Musalmans get rid of the Hindus. If the Hindus entertain any such designs they must know that they lost their opportunity when Mohammad Bin Qasim landed on the soil of Sindh twelve hundred years ago. Then the Musalmans were few, and to-day they number more than seventy millions. And if the Musalmans entertain similar notions, they, too have lost their opportunity. They should have wiped out the whole breed of Hindus when they ruled from Kashmir to Cape Comorin and from Karachi to Chittagong. And as the Persian proverb says, the blow that is recalled after the fight must be struck on one's own jaw. If they cannot get rid of one another, the only thing to do is to settle down to co-operate with another, and while the Musalmans must remove all doubts from the Hindu mind about their desire for Swaraj for its own sake and their readiness to resist all foreign aggression, the Hindus must similarly remove from the Muslim mind all apprehensions that the Hindu majority is synonymous with Muslim servitude. As for myself, I am willing to exchange my present servitude for another in which my Hindu fellow-countryman would be the slave-driver instead of the foreign master of my destiny, for by this exchange I would at least prevent the enslavement of 250 millions of my co-religionists whose slavery is only another name of

the continued existence of European Imperialism. When at Lucknow in 1916 some Hindu complained to my late chief, Bal Gangadhar Tilak Maharaj, that they were giving too much to the Musalmans, he answered back like a true and far-seeing statesman: "You can never give the Musalmans too much." To-day when I hear complaints that we are showing great weakness in harping on Hindu-Muslim unity when the Hindu show no desire to unite, I say, "You can never show too great weakness in your dealings with Hindus." Remember, it is only the weak who fear to appear too weak to others. With this observation I take my last leave of this question without a proper and a lasting settlement of which we can effect nothing.

This was the main question to be dealt with at Delhi even though the Special Session was held in order to arrive at a settlement of the Council-entry question. I have devoted so large a portion of my address to it not only because of its importance, but also because happily the other is no longer a live issue. At Delhi at my solicitation the Congress removed the ban and permitted those who had religious or other conscientious objections against entering the Legislatures or voting at the then forthcoming elections to do so, and suspended the propaganda in favour of the boycott of Councils which had achieved such signal success three years previously. The elections have been held, and it can, in my humble judgment, serve no useful purpose to re-open a question which kept us occupied in much sterile activity for more than a year sorely tried our temper. I hold strong views on the subject of the triple boycott of Councils, law-courts and school and colleges, and did not shrink from giving expression to them in strong, or as my Swarajist friends complained, perhaps in too strong language in the course of the discussion in Subjects Committee at Delhi. I hold the same views to-day, and would gladly give expression to them again in equally strong language if I could be convinced that it was necessary in the best interest of the Congress and the country. But of this I am as little convinced as of the soundness of the Swaraj Party views and on the contrary, I am fully convinced that no word should escape me which would estrange from the

Indian National Congress a single Indian who has any national feeling. In fact, I desire to take a leaf out of the book of the late Lord Morley, whose recent death has removed from the world one who had shown both courage and resource in asking his fellow countrymen also to do such justice to India as he himself was capable of doing, "Let us rally the Moderates."

I take no party view of the recent elections, and the franchise is far too restricted to read in them the judgment of the nation. But if one thing is more certain than another it is this, that India refuses to co-operate any longer with its foreign rulers. Many have helped to disillusion those honest Nationalists who still held the opinion which many of us held as recently as four years ago. The discussions in the Imperial Council with regard to the status of Indians overseas have been extensively advertised that it must be a very foolish fish that would still be deceived by the poor bait offered. South Africa where the Indian population still numbers 160000 is adamant. The Imperial Government, which cannot plead its impotence to interfere in the so-called "internal affairs" of free Dominions when Kenya and other Crown Colonies are concerned, cannot hold out any hopes of reversing its palpably iniquitous decision, and has only consented to hear India's case once more. But the other Dominions are "sympathetic" since sympathy cost so little and even here they are not quite so optimistic where the Indians in British Columbia, or the "Komagata Maru" fame, still numbering some 1100 are concerned, though the rest of Canada, which has only a bare hundred, is disposed to be generous. I am prepared to give the fullest credit to the impassioned advocacy and highly emotional appeals of Dr. Sapru, and his victory has been complete. But, alas, he had aimed so low from the very outset that his victory leaves such of us as could not like him feel the heat of the encounter uncomfortably cold.

It reminds me of a friend who had left a lucrative enough post and, making a new departure for an up-country Muslim graduate, had started business as a commission agent in Bombay. One day he met me with every show of exultation and announced that he had closed the day with cent per

cent profit in the transaction that had kept him fully engaged. But when I asked for more details I learnt that my friend had sold a few dozen Japanese paper serviettes, and that the cent per cent profit would hardly pay the day's rent of his office. After long and weary years of strife the Imperial Council passed in 1921 a Resolution recognising the desirability of conceding equal status to Indians overseas, but Hamlet was acted with the part of the Prince of Denmark carefully cut out by General Smuts, the Imperial Dramatic Censor. And yet India was asked to rejoice over her cent-per-cent profits. However, as it happened the profits remained unrealised, and two whole years later the battle had to be fought again over the Imperial council. There were doubts about the nature of the bargain, such as whether payment was only desirable or necessary, and here the slim Boer General wanted to rescind the entire transaction. But luck has favoured the travelling agents of India again, even though there was much disagreement among them, and one of the two has made a discovery not less remarkable than that of Columbus inasmuch as he has discovered in the Boer General a skilfully disguised friend of India. We have secured cent per-cent profits again, and a raving commission will go out to each of the partners in the other party's firm and by direct dealing ascertain what prospect there is of any payment. This, then, is the net gain. Dr. Sapru's travelling agents, no doubt some of the Great Unemployed, will have the great privilege of having direct dealings with the partners of John Bull, Sons & Co. Lest I may be suspected of belittling the results achieved, I quote the conclusion laboriously reached by the "Times" at the far end of its leading article on "India and the Commonwealth" "The spirit of sympathy," concludes the "Times," "and of good-will expressed by the representatives of the British Government and of the Dominions Overseas, the sincere appreciation of the share of India in the Commonwealth — these are hardly less important to her than the practical recognition of her right to negotiate for herself with the other partners." Yes, Dr. Sapru and his royal companion have indeed secured "the practical recognition of India's right to negotiate for herself with the other partners"; but

when will the bargain be concluded and payment received, and—what will be its amount?

Imperial Conferences will no doubt continue to succeed each other with great regularity, and the success of the Indian dependency at each will be advertised more and more extensively. But it is too much for poor human nature to wait patiently and continue to hope while the Imperial stratification proceeds from the Archean or Pre-Cambrian stratum through all the Paleozoic, Cainozoic strata or division in their true order of antiquity, and the long list of sub-division, such as the Eocene, Oligocene, Miocene, and Pliocene before we come to the Pleistocene or Glacial and finally to the post-Glacial or Human period. No honest Moderate would be so moderate as to be satisfied with this crawling pace of our Imperial progress, and no honest Liberal could be so liberal as to give unlimited time to England to do us bare justice, especially when they recognise as they must more and more clearly as each day passes, that a wrong system of education is fast paralysing us and robbing us of our youth and manhood.

When their disillusionment is just as complete as ours, the question will still have to be answered, "How far are they prepared to go?" Non-Co-operation has from the very outset required only minimum in the Post-Gandhi era far exceeds the maximum in most cases of pre-Gandhi period. But Liberty can neither be won nor retained on the principle of limited liability. Dr. Sapru's advocacy may have been all that it could be, but what is there to follow it? Only "resolutions," petitions and protests, and at best a silly **Hartal** to wind up with? If that is all, let us leave off this crazy pursuit of politics. Those whose ancestors have won freedom on the field of Runnymede or after the "crowning mercy" of Worcester or by razing the Bastille to the ground may play with politics. We have to yet win our Magna Carta and our Bill of Rights, and it is premature for us to treat politics as a western pastime. For long we thought in terms of the Penal Code, and now we think we have advanced very far on the road of Reform if we think in terms of Dicey and of Erskine May. We forget that we have still to think in terms of History! I am prepared to admit that the Liberal gun is long

enough. The length of the barrel, however, counts for little. It is the charge behind that matters. Once every Liberal or Moderate makes up his mind that patriotism must be to him as it was to every patriot in the world's history who won freedom for his country from a foreign yoke—a matter of unlimited liability, then—all is well. The Congress is his proper place even though he may at first proceed at a slow pace from force of habit. And it is just because I know that the leaders of the Swaraj Party are prepared to go to any length that I refused to be a party to driving them out of the Congress.

It is true many of the Swarajists have retained to this day something of their laboriously acquired western mentality and revel in parliamentary discussions and debates. Many more who have willingly relinquished all thought of the use of force even for purposes of self-defence want the spice of this wordy warfare to make the insipid fare prepared at Bardoli piquant enough for their jaded palates. Many more still have not fully understood the almost unlimited possibilities of the Charkha which must revolutionise Indian life while it frees us from economic slavery. Above all, the Swaraj party is the embodiment of the depression experienced by all India when Mahatma Gandhi, after having brought the country to the very door of Swaraj, suddenly had to declare that it was unwise to force that door by resorting to mass Civil Disobedience, and that his plan of action must be changed from an offensive bold to the verge of audacity to a defensive which to those who did not know our generalissimo looked almost like a surrender. But as I told the Mahatma when I was passing through Bardoli on my way from the Karachi goal to the Bijapur goal, his change of plan was out of his strength and not out of his weakness, and had he been left free for some weeks longer he would have changed the face of the whole situation. He was, however, arrested and imprisoned before the people had recovered from the first depressing shock of Bardoli, and although there were hundreds and thousands nay, hundreds of thousands and millions, who loved him and felt the pang of separation, apparently there was none who could put a new life into the Bardoli programme and make full use of the weapon of offence which the Government had

placed in Indian hands by treating the Mahatma as a felon. I have not sufficient data at my disposal to enable me to say whether the Mahatma was justified in listening to the despairing counsel of those who hastened to inform him that mass Civil Disobedience free from grave danger of violence was impossible after the Chauri-Chaura affair. But I do think Civil Disobedience free from such danger was possible immediately on the imprisonment of Mahatma Gandhi and I would have deliberately disobeyed my chief and fought the Government with the weapon it had placed in my hand. No physician, as my brother says, is permitted to prescribe anything for himself when he is ailing and after Mahatma Gandhi was "buried alive," it was enough if we paid due regard to his creed of Non-Violence, without having to carry out his testamentary injunction with regard to the suspension of Civil Disobedience also. Had such a course been followed I doubt if the Swaraj party would have come into being.

Be that as it may, the existence of the Swaraj party cannot be ignored, whatever view we may have formed about its genesis. Its early beginnings were small enough, but the peregrinations of the Civil Disobedience Committee which occupied the time, attention and energies of some of our best workers also succeeded in diverting the attention of all from the work of construction, and drove many of the most zealous among our younger men into the group which sought to enter the Councils. It is an idle speculation now, except the extent that it helps us to formulate a plan for future work, to estimate how the chances of this group would have been affected if the programme of constructive work had been pushed forward and the younger men had been kept busy. On the other hand, some of my Swarjist friends also want me to plunge into speculation and estimate how much greater would have been their success at the polls than it has already been if the Delhi self-denying ordinance suspending our boycott propaganda had been issued at Gaya. I might answer them by suggesting another line of speculation based on characteristic self-conceit, viz, whether there would have been any Swaraj party in existence at all if I had been



permitted to be with them at Gaya to dissuade them from following a course of such doubtful wisdom. But all this is idle talk now. The Swaraj party is there to-day and even though it may be composed of some very dissimilar elements, it is undoubtedly strong enough in numbers to-day and has always been strong in the quality of its leadership. More than all else, it was permitted at Delhi to go to polls on its own moral and religious responsibility. It has gone there and has achieved great enough success considering what forces were arrayed against it, how short a time it had in which to organise its own forces, and how greatly it was handicapped by the fact that some of its best members were disqualified from contesting the elections owing to their having undergone longer terms of imprisonment than those which do not affect eligibility. Then too, electoral rolls were most defective, mainly perhaps because three years ago nobody but the Liberals cared for such things and until very recently even those who ultimately joined the Swaraj party had not finally made up their minds to contest the elections or to go to the polls. It is true a very large number of votes have been given not to the individuals that sought them, but to the Congress, and "Tell it not in Gath; whisper it not in the streets of Ascalon"—to Mahatma Gandhi himself! There are friends of mine whose distress at such things is very deep, and who consider it a sacrilege thus to take the name of the Mahatma in vain. I greatly sympathise with them, and certainly cannot say that I approve of such political methods. But it must be remembered that those to whom people offered such votes were immeasurably nearer to Mahatma Gandhi than those who were opposed to them. Moreover, there were some among them who were inclined to sneer in a superior sort of way at a Mahatma so little versed in the affairs of this world as to pin his faith to the silly Charkha, which even our womenfolk had discarded in these advanced days. They thought that he was something of a bungler and a blunderer where finesse was required in dealing with the bureaucrats and with a Viceroy who was supposed to have out-Yankeed the Yankees during the War. Their election experiences

must have convinced not a few of these men that the Mahatma's name is still one to conjure with and that whatever skill in finessing they may possess, their strength even in the Councils lies in the backing which people who loved and revered the Mahatma were prepared to give to them as his followers and associates. This experience is a valuable asset to them, and the good sense, restraint and dignity which their leaders have in the hour of their victory in full conformity with our expectations from them, make them a valuable element in the Congress. It is true we have no such expectations from their programme as they have themselves; but while removing where really necessary, any idea that may be lurking in the people's mind that it is not the constructive programme but the Council that bring in Swaraj, we must give to the Swarajists a perfectly free hand, and add to that our heartiest good wishes that they may succeed. We suspended at Delhi the exercise of our right to carry on a propaganda of Council boycott, but we surrendered no principle. Nor are we prepared to do that to-day, as we shall no doubt be doing if we agree to accept any responsibility of guiding the Swarajists in the Councils. This we cannot do. Obviously, the Swarajists will not be able to spare as much time for the constructive work as those of us who have not to attend to Council duties; but I have satisfied myself that their responsible leaders intend to assist us to the best of their power and ability, and in this way strengthen their own hand also in the Councils. If they have to leave the Councils at any later stage, the work that will have by then been done outside in their constituencies through our joint efforts will ensure this much, that no bureaucratic Cromwell could say of their exit that not a dog barked when they took their departure. And if, as a result of their labours in the Councils, Swaraj is achieved, I for one would certainly not refuse to accept it. If peace, harmony and good-will were needed at Delhi to preserve the great reputation of the Congress they are still needed to-day to enhance that reputation and to help us to carry out the constructive programme.

It was in the interests of this programme that I interested

myself in the settlement at which we arrived at Delhi, for a whole year had been all but wasted by the major portion of the provinces in mutual recriminations, and if Mahatma Gandhi's release was to be obtained not by appeals Ad-Misericordiam but through our own efforts, it was necessary to resume the work to which the Mahatma had rightly pinned his faith. I did not at the time myself realise the full extent of the havoc wrought since his removal: but the few replies that I have received to my enquiries about the details of the work done are sufficient indication that through one cause or another little work has been done. It is true there are provinces like Gujrat the work of which does credit to my friend Srijut Vallabhahai Patel and to the band of devoted workers that Mahatma Gandhi left to work under him. Few provinces could show anything like as good a record of educational work, and but for Gujrat, the Khadi produced in other provinces would have remained unsold too long. The great glory of the Mahatma, however, was not that he changed the face of Gujrat, but that he also changed the face of the whole of India. No province did he leave exactly where he had found it. Gujrat is even now preparing a surprise for those who think that no area could be fit for Civil Disobedience if the Mahatma's characteristically high standard of preparation was to be retained. But the example of Gujrat has not proved infectious enough, and we cannot afford to weap ourselves up in self-sufficiency. The speed of the fleet is the speed of the slowest boat, and there are, alas, too many slow boats in our fleet, though, thank God, all are still sea-worthy. I could not place before my No-Changer friends sounder canons of criticism than "A No-Changer" writing in 'Young India' after Delhi has done.

There is a limit (he writes) beyond which reason and argument cannot go. Some conclusions are in the nature of action, and they go beyond the pale of pure rationality. Where reason fails to persuade, experience becomes the hard task-master. We realised that we had arrived at such a crisis. One year of argument and paralysis was tending to harden man in their Pharisaism and self-complacency. The testing time had come not only on the Swarajists, not only on Mohamed Ali, but on us also,—the No-Changers. We

have to submit ourselves to the discipline of facts. Since the days of the Calcutta Special Congress, Gandhism had won all along the line; and we, Gandhites, have been in continuous peril of loose thinking and dragged effort. It is good for everybody to be beaten. If there is truth in us, the very castigation of defeat will lead us to examine ourselves anew and find strength. If, on the contrary, Gandhism has become in our hands a plea for lethargy and refusal to re-think the implications of last-developing reality, we are not the true followers of our Chief, we are not worthy to be the custodians of his message to the world. Reality—that is the ultimate touchstone.

Yes, Reality is the ultimate touch-stone, the truest and the surest that ever existed, and Swarajists and No-Changers, and you and I, all of us, friends, shall be tested and measured by Reality. That is why I preach to you the gospel of work. It is not as easy a gospel to practise as it is easy to preach and that is why we have more critics than workers. But work well done furnished an exhilarating experience which the sterile pleasures of criticism can never equal. As the Sanskrit poet, referring to the creative effort of poetry, says, "Little does the barren woman know of the pain and anguish of a mother's labours and less still of the indescribable joy of motherhood at the sight and touch of the now-born babe." Through labour alone shall a free India be re-born.

You will no doubt ask me what should be our work; and my reply after the most careful consideration is that we cannot better the much-maligned Bardoli programme. If we continue to give up each item of work on finding difficulties and obstacles in our way, we shall never accomplish anything. Many people tell you—Non-Co operation has failed when they only mean that they, or we, or both, have failed to rise to the height of our ideal. And yet, as I have already told you, the steps proposed by the Mahatma are easy. Remember what the commonest of common soldiers is prepared to sacrifice when you feel that you must re-start your practice as a lawyer, or file your law-suit, or send your boy to a better-equipped school.

As for the man who cannot even wear Khadi, it is no use taking him into serious consideration. And yet he is not unpatriotic, nor hopelessly selfish, but only lazy and indolent. Well, he has got to be roused out of his indolence, and the best and the most unfailing agency for this is the womanhood of India. Whosoever may change and fall from the high ideal of our great chief, the women of India are true to him, true to the nation, and true to themselves. With a few expert men like Seth Jammalal Bajaj and Maganlal Bhai and Chaganlal Bhai Gandhi to assist and advise them and a full complement of book-keepers and clerks, etc., our sisters should be able to take the entire charge of the Khadi work in every province and district. Men may go to goal, and men may come back, but the women of India should go on working our Khadi department for ever.

The other departments are also to be organised and the next in importance to Khadi is the department of National Education. I feel sorry that I did not press sufficiently hard at Bezwada, in 1921, for the creation of a Central Board of Education. But now a Central Educational Board and Provincial Boards must be created, and the education of our boys and girls must be seriously taken in hand. I need not go through the whole list of departments for we cannot afford to neglect any item of the Bardoli programme. But we must follow the plan of 1921, and while working all simultaneously, we must concentrate on particular departments during particular periods of the next year.

But all this is idle talk without funds, and the provision of funds is one item which requires concentration all through the year. When the country knows that it is only by carrying out the Mahatma's programme of work that we can manufacture the key of Yerrowda gaol, and that no work is possible without solvency, it will not fail to respond to our call. But apart from large donations to be appealed for at some fixed time, we must tax permanent, though small, sources of revenue, and enable the poor to go on contributing their mites to the National Chest. Fixed monthly contributions must be arranged for and other similar means of securing the poor man's assistance

at intervals and in ways suited to his convenience must be thought out in addition to a well-organised national 'drive' for securing at least as many members of the Congress as the number of Indians who have been enfranchised. If however, we work with a will, a full crore should not prove too many.

And yet much as money may be necessary for working the Mahatma's programme, a powerful organisation is just as necessary to secure money. This cannot be in the main an organisation run by unpaid men. It is astonishing how we got on so long with our national work covering the whole area of this sub-continent with a paid establishment hardly large enough for a single department in a single district. We are face to face with a strange situation. On the one side we need competent, zealous and thoroughly reliable workers to carry on the national work, and have not got them. On the other hand, we have been so hard hit by the Non-Co-operation programme, and they are very far from being unemployable. It is time that we accepted the obvious and the only possible solution of this double difficulty. We may pay our workers only a living wage on the reduced scale of the era; but that living wage must be paid to those splendid workers who have made great sacrifices for the sake of the nation. Remember, a system that requires martyrs to work it gets worked in the next generation by cheats. And in any case, even martyrs have to be fed and clothed before they quit this world. India is witnessing to-day the spectacle of greedy foreign servants clamouring like so many Oliver Twists for more when they have already had much more than even gluttony as a rule demands. The Indian Civil Servant, who is seldom Indian, or civil or a servant, already gets pay more than any class of public servant of similar merit anywhere else in the world. It is he who always sets the pace to members of other services and thus continues to drain the resources of one of the poorest countries in the world. And he is doing this again so soon after the last increase in his emoluments. And yet it is he who accuses Indians engaged in the service of the nation of dishonest practices. I have no doubt that the moment

he learns that the Congress is asked to pay the poorest of poor wages to such national workers he and his supporters in the Press will commence their old game of vilifying men who are the truest servants of India. Those who received their wages in hundreds will be assailed by those who receive them in thousands and yet serve India so poorly. But this is part of the day's work and we must not mind it.

This, to my mind, is the most urgent need of the Congress, and I trust you will take steps to create an efficient organisation which will carry on the work of the Congress year in and year out. A proper National Secretariat, if possible located in some central place like Delhi, similar Provincial Secretariats and District Offices must be organised, and work in these secretariats and offices must be properly differentiated into the various departments which we need to maintain. The Working Committee itself should be composed of men who are able to attend frequent meetings either at a central place, or wherever required by the exigencies of the moment.

Of course, we must see that all organisations are doing practical work which is capable of being checked and estimated, and that expenditure is not allowed, after the initial month or thereabouts, to exceed revenue. I understand that the Salvation Army in England when it sends out workers to new centres pays them for a week's board and lodging in advance, and during that week they have to earn enough to pay their way in the following week. Later on they are required to send a definite contribution to the Central Organisation. We shall have to follow some such system with regard to those of our workers who are engaged in enrolling Congress members. Once this machinery is set up, I feel confident the country can be roused again, and we shall be able to beat in 1924 the record of 1921. Remember, there is one great difference between now and 1921. Then the Mahatma was free to organise and control the work, but to-day, although we shall miss him greatly, his very absence from our midst should stimulate us to work with redoubled energy. What would Christianity be without the Cross and Islam

without the tragedy of Kerbala? As I have said before we have not yet made full use of our Cross. Friends, let us do it now if we bear any love towards our absent leader, and calling upon the nation to give us its full backing, free the country and break open the great Bastile which keeps Mahatma Gandhi and thousands of his disciples in chains.

We have before us the example of our Sikh brothers whose courage, tortitude, and above all perfect non-violence excite my envy. The Maharaja Saheb of Nabha has been deposed and the words in which the head of this foreign Government proclaims to us his firm resolve to keep him out of his State are only so much veiled blasphemy.

The Moving Finger writes ; and having writ,  
Moves on ; nor all your Piety nor Wit

Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,  
Nor all your Tears wash out a word of it.

We hold no brief for the Maharaja Saheb ; but this much is certain, that even if all that his detractors say of him be true, he was not deposed for any such shortcomings, but for his virtues. I am myself the subject of an Indian Ruler and have had fairly intimate experience of several Indian States I used to be approached very frequently by those friends who desired to see political reforms carried out in Indian States. But I used to put them off with the observation that the Indian States are our own, even though to-day they may prove far more unsafe for patriotic men than the rest of India. I used to add that once the rest of India had won Swaraj, Indian States would undergo a sea-change with astonishing rapidity. In the meantime it should be our policy not to rouse the suspicions of the rulers of these States, and to avail ourselves of every opportunity to prove to them that we are not unmindful of their difficulties nor indifferent to what they too, have to suffer from this foreign bureaucracy. I did not know at the time that the Government would provide such an opportunity so soon. But now that it has been provided let us avail ourselves of it, for in doing so we also be safeguarding the interests of religion. The Maharaja Saheb of Nabha has suffered at least partly, because he strongly sympathised with his co-religionists in their efforts to free



themselves from the foreign bureaucratic incubus, and to reform their sacred Gurudwaras. And the Sikhs in their turn are suffering because they have had the courage to stand up for one of our Indian Rulers whom the bureaucracy desires to keep in perpetual dependence upon itself. But, as I have said before, the recent action of Government in declaring the Siromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee and the Akali Dal to be unlawful assemblies is a blow aimed not only at those bodies, or at the entire Sikh community; it is a challenge to the entire nation. Each community that dares to live will be similarly dealt with if we shrink from accepting the challenge to-day and it will only be a question, of whose turn at the turmoils will come next?

We have already resolved to offer some assistance to our Sikh brethren so that we may not be guilty of indulging in lip-sympathy only. But something more than that is required. A better opportunity for Civil Disobedience at least on a provincial scale never presented itself since the arrest of the Mahatma; but it is no use disguising from ourselves the fact that to organise Civil Disobedience is no easy matter. We must be sure of our capacity to undergo unlimited sufferings, and since constructive work has not been done this year even as well as it was done in 1921, there is little to indicate how much suffering the nation is prepared to endure. If, however we resume our constructive work with redoubled energy, Civil Disobedience will not remain a mere possibility, and the Civil Disobedience Committee appointed at Delhi will then be able to do much more fruitful work. For it must also be recognised that Civil Disobedience must be resorted to before Sawraj can be won. Let there be no mistake about this. There must be no shrinking from sacrifice, and this observation I would like to address in particular to such of my friends as have already undergone imprisonment for courageously standing up for their rights. If that experience makes them shrink from doing such work as may lead to a second period of imprisonment, then I say, they are not the men for us. The first imprisonment, is obviously wasted upon them, for they should never have undertaken to do any national work, or should at least

have made apologies to their foreign masters as soon as they were punished. To have undergone all this suffering and then to repent is the height of folly. As I wrote in the Bijapur gaol :

‘If there is a sin even greater than sinlessness, it is repentance over sin after the award of punishment.’

Friends, I have given you a long enough programme of work and I cannot help it if it is a little too insipid for your tastes. There is no royal road to Liberty. But there is one short cut, and that is the readiness to follow the road to the grave. Death for a great cause provides the most piquant sauce for the most tasteless dish, and I make bold to say that if your Working Committee took it into its head one day to resolve that all its members should prepare themselves to die and that the resolution was not only a “resolution” merely according to conventional phraseology, but embodied the members’ firm determination, I could guarantee them Swaraj within a year. And if it was the All-India Congress Committee that made such a resolve for itself, Swaraj could be won within a month. But, friends, Swaraj is in your hands and can be won to-day if each of you resolves to be ready to die at the country’s call. If, however we are not prepared to do this object to the Bardoli programme because it is dull and drab, then it is useless to talk of changing the Congress creed. Let us resolve to work, and if need be to die for the sake of our nation’s freedom, and if at the end of a year’s honest work, this Government does not send for our absent leader to witness its heartiest repentance for the past, and to receive the great Charter of Swaraj for the future let us in God’s name unfurl without a moment’s hesitation the flag of the Indian Republic, India’s Independent Federation of Faiths. Then, friends, you will not find your retiring President so unwilling to break the link that joins him to Great Britain as he is in some quarters suspected to be. In 1921 we gave a year to ourselves and the same period to the Government; but our part of the contract was not fulfilled, and we could not demand Swaraj as the price of our unfinished work. Let us go back to Nagpur, and with trust in our Maker

and a prayer addressed to him to give us courage, fortitude, perseverance and wisdom, begin the great work once more that our great leader has outlined for us. If only we do not prove unworthy of him we shall win back our lost liberty and it will not be as a prayer for success, but as the declaration of victory won, that we shall then raise the old, old cry.

*Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai !*

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### **Dr. M. A. ANSARI—1928**

Fellow Delegates.—Ladies and Gentlemen :—

I find it difficult to put into words of my deep sense of gratitude at the confidence you have placed in me by calling upon me to preside over the deliberation of the Indian National Congress at this critical juncture in the history of our struggle for freedom. This meeting of the Congress at Madras, takes me back to the day more than a quarter of a century ago—when as an under-graduate full of hope and enthusiasm, I had my first glimpse of our great national gathering. Little did I dream then that in that very city it would fall to my lot to occupy the chair which has been filled in the past by some of the greatest sons of India. Our national movement has increased in force and volume since those days. The political awakening of the people has become widespread, the intensity of the struggle has become more severe and, with the march of time, the problems we are called upon to solve have grown more and more complex. The task of your President has, in consequence become delicate and difficult. It was only the hope that I could count upon your indulgence towards my shortcomings and your generous support in the discharge of my duties that encouraged me to undertake this heavy responsibility

The inter-dependence of political problems in different countries and the danger arising out of the economic and political bondage of India to the peaceful progress of humanity at large, specially to the interests of the workers in Great Britain are being gradually realized and while Imperialist and Capitalist interests are carrying on as organised campaign of misrepresentation and verification against India in order to justify and perpetuate its exploitation sub-servience, the presence among us to-day, of the distinguished fraternal delegates from across the seas give hope that fellow-victims of Imperialism and Capitalism in other parts of the world have begun to appreciate the necessity of closer co operation and joint action to fight the common enemy I offer these friends a sincere and cordial welcome on behalf of the Indian National Congress and the people of India.

A matter of greater pleasure and satisfaction to me is that my appeal for a re-united Congress has met with such a generous response. I rejoice to find among us once more veterans and tried champions whose names are inseparably associated with India's fight for freedom. I cordially welcome all these comrades and fellow workers back to the fold of the Congress and hope and pray that, as in the past so in the future, the country will derive the fullest benefit from their services.

In the statement published some time back I had touched upon salient features of the existing political situation and briefly expressed my own views regarding the most effective method of dealing with it. I do not therefore propose to address you to great length to-day. But even in a brief survey we must take into account every issue that has direct bearing on the furtherance of our political programme. All schools of political thought in India are agreed that the goal of our activities is a free and well governing India, offering equal opportunities to all and recognising, guaranteeing the just and legitimate rights of all sections and classes, at peace within herself and friendly with the rest of the world. Indians do not claim anything more or less than that they shall occupy the same position and enjoy the same rights in their country as free people do in their own. If this can be achieved within the Empire,

they have no desire to break away from it, but if the Imperial connection stands in the way of our reaching the goal, we should not hesitate to sever that connection. Our motto in the words of Mahatma Gandhi, should be "within the empire if possible, without if necessary."

I do not minimise the difficulties in our path. They are many but none so formidable as the one arising out of the aggressiveness of Imperialism and the greed of High Finance, the two most fruitful sources of trouble and misery in the world to-day. Empires are served and nations are deprived of their liberties to satisfy the Imperialist ambition and to monopolise resources in raw materials to feed the factories in Europe and to secure exclusive markets for their output.

Politicians and statesmen wax eloquent over the "mission civilisatrice" and the "white man's burden," but none has exposed the hollowness of these professions better than Cecil Rhodes, the great pioneer of Imperialism in South Africa, when he said: "Pure philanthropy is very well in its way, but philanthropy plus five per cent. is a good deal better." Joseph Chamberlain, that High Priest of Imperialism, was more outspoken. "The Empire," he said, "is commerce," and "India" he was frank enough to add, was "by far the greatest and the most valuable of all the customers we have or ever shall have". The history of this philanthropic burglary on the part of Europe is written in blood and suffering from Congo to Canton. The steel-frame theory of Government, the arrogant claims to trusteeship of dumb millions and the newly-invented illusion to cloak the pre-war Concert of Europe, known as the League of Nations, are but different manifestations of the same spirit. So long as these dangerous doctrines are pursued, the sources of human misery shall endure. India holds in her hands the remedy for this universal misfortune, for she is the key-stone of the arch of Imperialism. Once India is free the whole edifice will collapse. The best guarantee for the freedom of Asia and the peace of the world, is a free and self-governing India.

The problem then is how to free India. For over a generation the leaders of public opinion in the country advocated and practised a policy of complete co-operation

with the Government. That policy was doomed to failure from its very inception. Co-operation is possible between groups with common ideals. Where objects pursued are diametrically opposed there can be no co-operation. Co-operation in such circumstances can only mean surrender of the most cherished ideals on the part of the weak to the wishes and desires of the strong. The difference between the ideals of the two nations is nowhere brought out more vividly or in greater relief than in the report of the late Mr. Montagu, Liberal Secretary of State for India, noted for his pro-Indian sympathies. The report, which forms the basis of the Government of India Act of 1919, while promising progressive realisation of responsible government and extending lavish hopes for the future, clearly lays down :—

“It seems to us axiomatic that there cannot be a completely representative and responsible Government of India on an equal footing with the other self-governing units of the British Commonwealth until the component States whose people it represents and to whom it is responsible, or at least the great majority of them, have themselves reached the stage of full responsible Government. Nor even then can we say that the form or the degree of responsibility which will be reached in India will exactly correspond to that attained by the Dominions. The final form of India's constitution must be evolved out of the conditions of India, and must be materially affected by the need for securing Imperial responsibilities.”

If, however, our rulers forsake their divine mission of civilising “the inferior races” and cease to act the executors of the decrees of Providence, if they realise that a friendly and free India will be better customer than a sullen and hostile dependency kept under political and economic bondage, in short, if they recognise that there are civilisations and cultures equally good, if not better than their own, if they cease to think in terms of the ruler and the ruled and are prepared to meet us on terms of equality, it will then be time for us to revise our views on Co-operation.

An alternative policy advocated, on the set-back received

by the Non Co-operation Movement, was to capture the Councils and, by creating constitutional deadlocks, force the Government to yield to the wishes of the people. The advocates of this policy, however, failed to give its proper weight to the fact that the limitations imposed by the Government of India Act of 1919 rendered all such opposition ineffective and the creation of constitutional deadlocks a practical impossibility. They, no less than the advocates of the policy of Co-operation, should have realised that an ultra-constitutional issue could not be fought on a strictly constitutional plane. In a trial of strength there can be no hope of success if your opponent is also the referee. Practical experience has demonstrated the futility of such a policy even in Provinces where the believers in this method commanded a majority. They undoubtedly succeeded in exposing the hollowness of the so-called Reforms and by preventing the Government from packing legislatures with "safe" persons, they made it impossible for the rulers to present their autocratic and high-handed actions as representing the declared will of the people expressed through its chosen representatives. But all this has not materially advanced our cause nor has it brought us any nearer our goal, while the price paid for it is too dear. It has diverted the energies of some of our ablest men from problems of real national importance. The Council Programme, adopted at a time of depression, was professedly in the nature of experiment. We gave it a trial and if it has not fulfilled our expectation there is no reason to feel discouraged or disappointed. Let us revise our policy in the light of our past experience.

There are no two opinions regarding our goal. We all desire to see India free and self-governing. For the achievement of our object we are not wedded to any particular policy, nor do we consider any programme sacrosanct or binding for ever. We have to judge a policy or a programme by its suitability to our peculiar social and political conditions, by its practicability and by the results which it is likely to give within a measurable period of time. We have now before us the results of the three experiments made by the Congress during the last forty years. We gave an

unbroken period of thirty-five years to Co-operation, about a year and a half to Non-Co-operation and four years to the policy of Obstruction within the Councils and Constitutional Deadlocks. We can, at this stage, appraise the real value of each programme and judge the comparative merits and demerits of each. Co-operation has led us nowhere. Obstruction within the Councils has not given us any better results. Non-Co-operation certainly did not achieve all that was expected of it, but it was through our own weakness and inability to rise to the high level demanded by it and not through any inherent defect of that policy. Non-Co-operation did not fail us, we failed Non-Co-operation. We did receive an unquestionable and a serious set-back in the first encounter. I also admit that in the present atmosphere of mutual suspicion and hatred created by deplorable communal quarrels with the whole country divided into hostile political camps and factious groups, there is no prospect of an immediate resumption of Non-Co-operation. The spirit of Non-Co-operation, however, has come to stay as a potent force in Indian politics and as I have said elsewhere :—

I feel as certain as ever that apart from very extraordinary and unexpected occurrences we shall win back our freedom only by self-discipline, self-organisation and self-help and through a movement in which we would be obliged to resort to direct action in some shape or form. I firmly believe that India is only recuperating from the moral and material effects of a disastrous war and would soon emerge once more resuscitated and rejuvenated to attain what it is destined to attain.

How best then can we help this process of resuscitation and rejuvenation and prepare ourselves for the next encounter? It is my unshakable belief that this cannot be done unless we have established unity in the country, unity in the Congress, and unity in the councils, if people must still make use of them. Differences of opinion are inevitable. They have existed and will continue to exist. What we have to learn is the stage at which these differences, if persisted in, become injurious to the general interests of the country. We must learn to differentiate



between personal prestige and public weal and to sacrifice individual gain to the collective good.

There is no feature of the Indian political situation more disquieting than the shameful quarrels between Hindus and Mussalmans. No language can be too strong to condemn the murderous assaults and callous destruction of life and property in the riotings which occur with such painful frequency. Hardly a day passes when we do not hear of some violent outburst of communal fury in one part of the country or the other, leaving its legacy of bitterness and hatred threatening to reduce the country to one vast camp of warring communal factions bent on destroying each other. It is due to this that the Congress itself has lost its popularity. It is being relegated in many Provinces to a secondary position, and preference is being given to communal organisations, specially those which are militant. This state of affairs must not be allowed to continue longer. The problem of Hindu Muslim differences must be solved once for all and there is no organisation more competent and better fitted to put an end to it than the Indian National Congress.

While attempting to solve the Hindu-Muslim question we should not, however, mistake the symptom for the disease. The political and religious differences which are straining the relations between the two communities are but outward manifestations of a deeper conflict, not peculiar to India or unknown to history. It is essentially a problem of two different cultures, each with its own outlook on life, coming in close contact with one another. The best remedy lies in a recognition of the right of each culture to exist, in a development of a spirit of tolerance and respect and in the encouragement and cultivation of cultural affinity by the establishment of national institutions where young people of both the communities will come into touch with each other and get opportunities to study and understand the ideals underlying the civilisations of both. The educated Indian is forced by circumstances to study European culture but knows next to nothing about the culture of his fellow countrymen living next door. It is time this dangerous isolation and

colossal ignorance were ended. With greater knowledge of each other's deep-rooted sentiments and sympathy for each other's ideals, questions of separate representation, cow-slaughter and music before mosques will become matters of the past, of interest only to research scholars of Indian History.

In the meantime, we cannot afford to minimise or neglect the problem which faces us to-day. There are certain fundamental facts which it will be well for Hindus and Mussalmans to remember. They should not forget that they are Indians destined to live in India and die in India. Providence has bound their fates together indissolubly. If there be any Hindu brother of mine who imagines that he can get rid of seventy millions of his Muslim fellow-countrymen, he is labouring under a great delusion and the sooner he is disillusioned the better for him and the country. Similarly, if any Muslim brother of mine is dreaming of lording it over two hundred and fifty millions of his Hindu countrymen, he is living in a fool's paradise and the sooner he opens his eyes the better for the Muslim community and India. The Swaraj we are striving for will be neither Hindu Raj nor Muslim Raj. It will be a Joint Raj protecting the just and legitimate rights and privileges of all. Perpetual warfare cannot be the normal state of human society. The work in the communal cause apparently wishes to improve the economic, political and educational position of his community. With this I have no quarrel. But for any solid and lasting good to be done either to a group or to a nation, tranquility and peace are essential conditions. Violent communal outbursts may benefit any other party, they certainly cannot benefit the country nor do they serve even exclusive communal interests. Instead of resorting to these barbarous methods of settling differences, I would appeal to my countrymen to make use of the great national tribunal, the custodian of the rights and privileges of all sections and communities inhabiting this country, the Indian National Congress, for the protection of their rights and the redress of their grievances.

A subject people trying to shake off foreign domination cannot afford to carry on an internecine struggle. We

cannot in one breath talk of freedom and communalism, for they are the very antithesis of each other. It would be difficult for an outside observer to believe in the genuineness of our demand when he observes the fratricidal war we are waging to-day. Our very patriotism begins to appear a sham. In our efforts to gain a little advantage here and a little advantage there over our rivals, we are unconsciously playing into the hands of the common adversary whose position is being strengthened every day. Can we not all with one joint effort and determination get rid of this degrading mentality? Self-respect, even self-interest, requires us to enlarge our vision and look beyond momentary and sectional advantage to the lasting national gain.

The causes of communal antagonism exercising the minds of the leaders of the two communities as brought out at the various Unity Conferences crystallise themselves into two distinct groups : Political and Religious.

It will serve no useful purpose to enter into a description of how the Mussalmans, fearing that the sense of political responsibility of the majority was not sufficiently advanced to trust it with the protection of their rights, demanded separate representation and separate electorates. It is a matter of past history and every one in this assembly is fully aware of it. It is enough for our present purpose to state that, realising the disastrous consequences recent developments were likely to lead to, the Indian National Congress, at its annual session last year at Gauhati, called upon the All-India Congress Committee to devise measures for a settlement of the trouble in these terms :—

This Congress calls upon the Working Committee to take immediate steps in consultation with the Hindu and Mussalman leaders to devise measures for the removal of the present deplorable disturbances between Hindus and Mussalmans and submit a report to the All-India Congress Committee, not later than the 31st March, 1927. This Congress authorises the All-India Congress Committee to issue the necessary instructions in that behalf to all Congressmen in the country and take such other steps as it may deem fit after consideration of the said report.

The President got into touch with the leaders of public opinion in both communities. He travelled extensively all over the country to mobilise the good sense and active co-operation of both communities and, finally, arranged a series of conversations at Delhi. It is a great tribute to the sincerity, zeal and indefatigable energy of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, that a formula for settlement of outstanding political differences was at last discovered. I would be lacking in my duty if I did not place on record the appreciation of the Indian National Congress of the spirit of patriotism and statesmanship displayed by the Muslim leaders who rose above prejudice, suspicion and narrow communal outlook and boldly came forward with the proposals which presage a new orientation of Muslim policy in India. The Working Committee at a meeting held on the 15th May, "considered the proposals made by representative Muslim leaders who met in Delhi, on the 20th March last, as well as the opinion of the Hindu Maha Sabha and other Hindu organisations of other leaders and representatives of both communities", and submitted its report to the All-India Congress Committee, on the 16th May, 1927. The resolution, embodying the recommendations of the Working Committee passed by the All-India Congress Committee, with the unanimous support of all the members present, including some of the foremost leaders of the Hindu Maha Sabha, speaks volumes for the political sagacity of the Committee and was a personal triumph for the President and his great powers of persuasion.

The All-India Congress Committee approves and adopts the report of the Working Committee on the Hindu-Muslim question and the recommendations contained therein, and calls upon all Congress organisations to take necessary steps to have the following recommendations carried out :—

1. That in any future scheme of constitution, so far as representation to the various legislatures is concerned, joint electorates in all the provinces and in the Central Legislature be constituted.

2. That, with a view to give full assurances to the two great communities that their legitimate interests will be safeguarded in the Legislatures for the present, and it

desired, such representation of the communities should be secured by the reservation of seats in joint electorates on the basis of population in every province and in the Central Legislature

Provided that reciprocal concessions in favour of minorities including the Sikhs in the Punjab may be made by mutual agreement so as to give them representation in excess of the proportion of the number of seats to which they would be entitled on the population basis in any province or provinces, and the proportions so agreed upon for the provinces shall be maintained in the representation of the two communities in the Central Legislature from the provinces.

3 (a) That the proposal made by the Muslim leaders that reforms should be introduced in the North-West Frontier Province and British Beluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces is, in the opinion of the Committee, a fair and reasonable one, and should be given effect to, care being taken that simultaneously with other measures of administrative reform an adequate system of judicial administration shall be introduced in the said provinces.

(b) (i) That with regard to the proposal that Sind should be constituted into a separate province, this Committee is of opinion that the time has come for the redistribution of provinces on linguistic basis a principle that has been adopted by the constitution of the Congress.

(ii) The Committee is also of opinion that such readjustment of provinces be immediately taken in hand and that any province which demands such reconstitution on a linguistic basis be dealt with accordingly.

(iii) The Committee is further of opinion that a beginning may be made by constituting Andhra, Sind and Karnatak into separate provinces.

4. That, in the future constitution, liberty of conscience shall be guaranteed and no legislature, central or provincial, shall have power to make any laws interfering with liberty of conscience.

Liberty of "Conscience" means liberty of belief and worship, freedom of religious observances and association and freedom to carry on religious education and propaganda with

due regard to the feelings of others and without interfering with similar rights of others.

5. That no bill, resolution, motion or amendment regarding inter-communal matters shall be moved, discussed or passed in any legislature, Central and Provincial, if a three-fourth majority of the members of either community affected thereby in that legislature oppose the introduction, discussion or passing of such Bill, Resolution, Motion or amendment.

Inter-communal matters mean, matters agreed upon as such by a Joint Standing Committee of both communities, of the Hindu and Muslim members of the legislatures concerned, appointed at the commencement of every session of the legislature.

This resolution is a great advance on the Lucknow Pact of 1916, which has so far regulated Hindu-Muslim relations. Its terms are so clear that there is no need of any further comment from me. I should, however, like to emphasise the importance of the decision regarding joint electorates. The one great cause of friction so far has been separate electorates. If the success of a candidate at elections depends entirely on the votes of his co-religionists, the tendency to exaggerate and accentuate points of communal friction and division in order to catch votes is inevitable. The resolution, while making the fullest possible allowance for the fear of minorities regarding adequate protection, by reservation of seats, presents fresh opportunities for the development of a spirit of friendliness and mutual confidence, the best augury for a United India.

The acceptance of the principle of representation on the basis of population puts our electoral system on a just and equitable basis. It puts an end, on the one hand, to the dissatisfaction felt at the preferential treatment accorded to minorities and, on the other, removes the grievance of the majorities in Bengal and the Punjab which were reduced to minorities. At the same time, the special interest of minorities have been safeguarded by the provision that if a three-fourth majority of their representatives opposes any measure affecting their interests it shall not be even discussed or moved.

The right of the Indian National Congress to settle communal differences has been challenged in certain quarters. It has been contended that the Congress has no jurisdiction in inter-communal matters, whether political or religious. I hold that no communal organisation or organisations put together, can supersede the Congress or enjoy even a parallel jurisdiction. The Indian National Congress is not meant for registering the decrees issued by the different communal organisations. It is primarily and essentially the only organisation that can deal with such matters and hold the balance even between community and community. If leaders of communal groups can come to a just and amicable agreement on any questions agitating the minds of their respective communities the Congress would unhesitatingly welcome it. But if they fail to arrive at an agreement the Congress, as the paramount national organisation, must step in and perform its obvious duty of adjusting communal relations and preserving communal peace and harmony undeterred by petulant threats and challenges from angry and disgruntled communalists.

So far as political differences are concerned the Congress adopted a satisfactory formula for their solution at Bombay. But religious and social points of difference still remained to be settled and the President gave the leaders of the communities an opportunity at Simla to come to an agreement on them. When the protracted negotiations ended in a fiasco the President took advantage of the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee to be held at Calcutta and issued invitations to prominent Hindu and Muslim leaders to give the Committee the benefit of their advice and help him and the Committee to complete the good work begun at Bombay. The result of these efforts is summed up in the two resolutions passed at the Unity Conference and adopted by the All-India Congress Committee :—

**1 Conversion.**—The All-India Congress Committee resolves that every individual or group is at liberty to convert or reconvert another by argument or persuasion but no individual or group shall attempt to do so, or prevent its being done, by force, fraud or other unfair means such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under eighteen years of age should not be converted unless it be along with

their parents or guardians. If any person under eighteen years of age is found stranded without his parents or guardian by persons of another faith, he should be promptly handed over to persons of his own faith. There must be no secrecy as to the person, place, time or manner about any conversion or reconversion, nor should there be any demonstration or jubilation in support of any conversion or reconversion.

Whenever any complaint is made in respect of any conversion or reconversion, that it was effected in secrecy or by force, fraud or other unfair means, or whenever any person under eighteen years of age is converted, the matter shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators who shall be appointed by the Working Committee either by name or under general regulations."

2. COW AND MUSIC.—"The All-India Congress Committee, while approving of the following resolution on the Cow and Music question as a fair settlement of opposite demands and points of view, authorises members of the Congress to carry on propaganda among Hindus and Muslims along the lines indicated in the resolution and calls upon the Working Committee to appoint a Sub-Committee for the purpose of carrying on such propaganda :

And further resolves that the resolution do come up for confirmation at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and the Congress to be held in Madras:—

'Whereas no community in India should impose or seek to impose its religious obligations or religious views upon any other community, but the free profession and practice of religion should, subject to public order and morality, be guaranteed to every community and person.

Hindus are at liberty to take procession and play music before any mosque at any time for religious or other purposes, but there should be no stoppage of the processions nor special demonstrations in front of a mosque, nor shall the songs or music sung or played in front of a mosque be such as is calculated to cause annoyance or special disturbance to the worshippers in the mosque.



Muslims are at liberty to sacrifice cows or, subject to existing municipal laws regulating the slaughter of animals for purposes of food, to slaughter cows, in any town or village, in any place not being a thoroughfare nor one in the vicinity of a temple or a mandir nor one exposed to the gaze of Hindus.

Cows should not be led in procession or in demonstration for sacrifice or slaughter.

Having regard to the deep-rooted sentiment of the Hindu community in the matter of cow-killing, the Muslim community is earnestly appealed to, so to conduct the cow sacrifice or slaughter as not to cause annoyance to the Hindus of the town or village concerned.

Whenever a complaint is made that any of the provisions of this resolution have been contravened, it shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators appointed by the Working Committee by name or under general regulations and their decision shall be final."

Efforts at composing communal differences in the past have been handicapped by attempts on the part of one community to impose restrictions on the enjoyment of its rights by the other. The result was that instead of removing mistrust and suspicion and creating a respect of each other's religious sentiments the solution generally led to a further intensification of the strife. The resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee are based on the recognition of complete freedom of each community to enjoy its rights to minimum restrictions necessary for peaceful corporate social life. The fear of any curtailment of their rights having been once removed, an appeal to the higher sentiments of the two communities, to their spirit of toleration and forbearance, is bound to have greater chance of success. It is not impossible that each community may even voluntarily forego a portion of the enjoyment of its rights out of regard for the sentiments and feelings of the other.

The Congress has given a definite lead. It has prescribed a potent remedy to eradicate the communal canker which has been eating into the very vitals of our body politic. It is now for us Congressmen to carry on a vigorous propaganda

to explain and popularise these resolutions and to bring them home to the Hindu and Muslim public all over the country. I earnestly appeal to every well-wisher of India, irrespective of his political creed, to lend a helping hand to the Congress in this noble cause. Specially do I appeal to the Press of the country to realise its great responsibility in the matter. There is no other agency which plays such an important part in the moulding of public opinion and the regulation of inter-communal relations. It is the powerful instrument for good or for evil and I regret to say that throughout this unhappy communal crisis, our Press, especially the Vernacular Press, has not exercised its influence for the good. With very few noble exceptions it has actually fanned the flames of conflict and lamentably failed in the discharge of its duties. I cannot have any complaint against the Anglo-Indian newspapers. They naturally serve the interests that maintain them. But is it too much to expect from our own journals and journalists that they will subordinate their selfish considerations to the supreme interest of common national good and ally themselves with forces working for the restoration of concord and amity? The conduct of News-Agencies in the country has not been altogether satisfactory either. Let us hope that they too will contribute their share to the restoration and maintenance of unity in the country. Let us all realise that it is a matter of life and death for us and on the success of our efforts to achieve unity in the country depends the whole future of India.

If I have discussed at length the question of Hindu-Muslim difference it is because like the ubiquitous microbe it has infected every sphere of our national activity. I am conscious that the question of Hindu-Muslim relation is only part of the broader problem of the rights of minorities and backward classes. The Sikhs in the North and the non-Brahmans in the South and the so-called Depressed Classes all over India, equally deserve our close attention. I do not propose to deal at length with the Sikhs or the non-Brahmans, but I cannot resist the temptation of putting in a plea on behalf of the millions of "untouchables". The removal of untouchability although a problem essentially for our Hindu

brothers to solve, must still be a matter of the deepest concern to every Indian inasmuch as the presence of such a large section of our fellow-countrymen suffering under grievous social and political disabilities, cannot but retard our efforts for the emancipation of our country.

Next importance to the re-establishment of communal harmony is the question of the re-organisation of the Congress on a wider basis. The set-back we received in the Non-Co-operation movement told heavily on the Congress. The keen enthusiasm of the palmy days of 1920 and 1921, when every city and every village had a Congress Committee of its own, began to cool down, and with the outbreak of communal dissensions gave place to apathy and in case fortunately rare to open hostility to the Congress. The communal question having been settled on the lines of the Bombay and Calcutta resolutions, measures must be adopted to make the Congress franchise popular and to induce all communities to join the Congress in large numbers. I am glad our non-Brahman friends have decided to come back to us and it gives me great pleasure to see them so well represented here to-day. It is, however, a matter of deep regret that the number of Muslims and Sikhs has dwindled considerably. The case of Parsis, who took such a leading part in the early life of the Congress, is worse still. I wish particularly to address the Indian Christians who have so far kept themselves aloof as a body from the Congress. I should like to tell them that if they are under the impression that they can serve the interests of their community by remaining outside the Congress, they should take a lesson from the experience of my co-religionists. The Musalmans of India allied themselves with forces other than national for a number of years and after bitter experience found out that they could advance their interests only by joining the Indian National Congress and making common cause with the rest of their countrymen. The Indian Christians will serve their community better by giving up their policy of isolation and adopting an Indian national outlook. I should like to see every section of our people entering into a healthy rivalry to contribute its share to the conduct of

national affairs through the Congress. The doors of the Congress should be thrown wide open to all parties and we should stop at nothing short of a surrender of basic principle to bring back every party to the Congress. Difference of opinion are bound to exist, but the best and the only place to fight them out is and should be the common platform of the mother of all political organisations in India, the Indian National Congress. Each party has an unrestricted right and opportunity to convince the Congress of the correctness of its point of view and to enlist the support of the majority for the policy it advocates. If the majority, rightly or wrongly fails to appreciate the correctness of that policy, until we have found a substitute for the rule of majorities, the only democratic and workable principle is to respect the decision of the majority. This does not mean that the minority loses its right to continue its endeavours to convert itself into the majority. Differences in detail or method should not be made the occasion of secession from the parent organisation and the setting up a separate party outside. Multiplicity of parties for minor differences is bad enough for countries already free and independent. We who are fighting for our elementary rights cannot afford to indulge in the luxury of a cramping and complicated system of parties. A great responsibility rests on the shoulders of the Indian intelligentsia whose duty it is to educate the masses to a realisation of their rights and privileges. The confusion caused by the existence of a number of parties lends to distraction and the great work of the uplift of the masses remains neglected. Let us concentrate on the largest common measure of agreement rather than emphasise points of disagreement. After all, the points on which we agree are many and those on which we disagree but few.

I do not believe in the Councils. At the same time I am aware that the Congress has permitted its members if they so desire to enter the Councils and a considerable number of my fellow-workers believe that they can render useful service to the country from inside them. To all this I humbly suggest that if they must go to the Councils, the least that the country expects of them is that instead of allowing

their opponents to take advantage of the division in their ranks they will join forces with other nationalist groups to form a people's party of Opposition and present a united front. As it is, on a majority of problems the various nationalist groups have been invariably found in the same lobby. The instructions issued by the Congress for work inside the Councils can form a good basis for united action. Should any alteration in these instructions be found necessary to facilitate joint action, it is always open to any group to come to the Congress and press its viewpoint, and whatever decision the Congress gives should be loyally obeyed by all.

"In the good old days" we looked forward with Congress to the conferring of "boons" by our rulers. Well, Providence in its "merciful" dispensation has conferred upon us as a real boon in the shape of the Statutory Commission. The manner in which the declared wishes and sentiments of the Indian people have been contemptuously disregarded should serve as an eye-opener even to the most confirmed optimist among us. It is the strongest and most convincing plea for the sinking of our differences and closing up of our ranks. Much has been said and written on the Commission, but little, as it seems to me, which touches the heart of the matter. Keen disappointment and surprise have been expressed at the exclusion of Indians from its personnel. I must confess I do not share any of these feelings. I am neither disappointed nor surprised. This was exactly what I had anticipated. It is not a question of the appointment of a Hindu peer or a Muslim knight, nor is it a question whether Indians should participate in its work as members, successors or advisers. The principle involved is totally different. It is basic and fundamental. No sane or self-respecting Indian can ever admit the claim of Great Britain to be the sole judge of the measures and time of India's political advance. We alone know our needs and requirements best and ours must be the decisive voice in the determination of our future. It is our inherent and inalienable right. Taking its stand on these principles the Congress has alone advocated the convening of a Round Table Conference of the representative of

India to be incorporated into an act of Parliament. It is only on these conditions that Indian can, consistently with national honour and dignity, agree to co-operate. Until Great Britain accepts these terms the Indian National Congress has no other alternative but to ask the people of India to treat the Statutory Commission as our Egyptian brothers treated the Milner Mission, and leave it severely alone. We can have no part or lot in a Commission which has been appointed in direct defiance of the declared will of the people of India.

The advent of the Statutory Commission should not divert our attention from the work of framing a constitution for India. The need for it had been felt for a long time and at the Bombay meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, the Working Committee was called upon to draw up, in consultation with leaders of political thought in the country a suitable Constitution for India. A constitution of this nature would remove suspense and doubt from the minds of the different communities regarding their position and status in the final political arrangement of the country. It would rally the different political parties round the Congress and prove of a incalculable value in the education of the people in their political rights and privileges, telling them in exact languages what they are called upon to fight for. Nor can we underrate its value in strengthening our hands generally in our struggle for the achievement of Swaraj.

To frame a constitution for a people consisting of 320 million souls, professing different religions and speaking different languages will be the most unique and gigantic experiment in democracy ever attempted. The task of the framers will be further complicated by the presence of Indian States exercising sovereign rights in their territories. Whatever be the final form of the constitution, one thing may be said with some degree of certainty, that it will have to be on federal lines providing for a United States of India, with existing Indian States as autonomous units of the Federation taking their proper share in the defence of the country in the regulation of the nation's affairs and other joint and common interests.

As soon as the Draft Constitution is ready the Congress should take steps to call a National Convention consisting of representatives of all interests, communities and political parties to consider it and give it a final shape.

The greatest misfortune that can befall a people is to lose its independence. Patriotism universally accepted as one of the highest forms of virtue in a free people, is condemned as vile crime in a subject race. There are very few in the ranks of our public workers who have not at one time or another, paid the penalty of their patriotic sentiments being consigned to prison as ordinary felons. It is not possible to give the exact number of the victims of lawlessness perpetuated in the name of peace and order, but taking into account only those sentenced in the Komagata Maru case, the Martial Law prisoners in the Punjab where boys of 10 and 11 years were condemned to transportation for life for "waging war" against the King, those incarcerated during the days of Non-Co-operation, the Sikhs imprisoned in connection with the Akali Movement and the large number of Moplahs punished and deported in 1922, the total swells to the staggering figure of 60,000. These 60,000, however, had the semblance of a trial in Ordinary Courts, Special Tribunals or the Martial Law Courts. The most tragic case is that of the hundreds of unfortunate young men who, for no other crime than the love they bore their country, have been condemned to a lingering death in the prime of their life, without even the mockery of a trial or the framing of a charge, under the provisions of the relic of legal antiquity. Regulation III of 1818 or that cruel weapon of coercion and repression forged in 1924 the Bengal Ordinance, subsequently put on the Statute Book under the dignified appellation of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1925. The story of the detainees of Bengal reads like a page from the history of the Middle Ages with the difference that while in the Middle Ages the moral consciousness of the world was not so well developed and the standard of civilisation was not so high, the tragedy of Bengal is being enacted in the 20th century when the sense of justice and moral standard of right and wrong are several centuries in advance of medievalism

and by people who claim to be torch-bearers of civilisation. It is the most damning confession of moral bankruptcy when the Government have not got the courage to bring these young men before their own law-courts to be tried by their own Judges and in accordance with the laws promulgated by themselves. I warn the Government against the consequence of the bitter conclusion such cruel persecution is burning into the very soul of the nation. Other Governments have tried repression to crush the spirit of freedom and for the result one has only to point to Russia and Ireland. Even the most credulous among us would find it difficult to have any faith in the genuineness of the professed intentions of the Government with regard to the future of India and the high-sounding principles enunciated in that connection when elementary rights of citizenship and liberty of person are so flagrantly violated every day. Restoration to liberty of these young men would be some indication of the advent of a better spirit in the regulation of the relations between India and Great Britain. Our efforts should not be confined merely to the release of these unhappy detainees, but a repetition of similar outrage on the inviolable rights of citizenship in the future should be made impossible by incorporating in the fundamental laws of the country a Declaration of Rights guaranteeing to every citizen liberty of person, liberty of speech, liberty of association and liberty of conscience.

Closely associated with the question of the detainees is the question of Indian nationalists compelled to live in exile in foreign lands. We may disagree with their methods of work in the past, but the abnormal conditions, which impelled them to adopt course of action, have disappeared and there is no longer any reason why they should be denied the right to return to the country of their birth and to serve it peacefully.

It is not detainees and exiles alone who suffer. Ordinary citizens are being deprived of their freedom of movement and their right of ingress and egress is being tampered with through an ingenious administration of the regulations relating to the grant of passports. Passports have become once more weapon in the hands of the bureaucracy to be



used against us. India has been turned into a vast internment camp and a number of Indians abroad have been successfully looked out. Respectable citizens have been prevented from leaving India even for purpose of health, business or travel. It will, perhaps, be difficulty to find a more glaring example of the abuse of the regulations than in the cancellation of the passport of Mr Shapurji Saklatwalla, M. P. Considered worthy of the highest honour and position of trust in England by the suffrage of English citizens, he has been declared unfit to enter the land of his birth. These disabilities must go and the fetters of the prison removed altogether.

The task before us, as I have already pointed out, is to put India on her feet. It goes without saying that we must primarily and mainly depend on our own resources and organisation to solve our problem, but it will greatly facilitate our task if we cease to view our problem as purely local. We have long committed the blunder of looking at them in an exclusively Indian setting. It is time we studied them in their international aspect and took note of every factor in world politics which has a bearing on them. The chief defaulters in this respect have been our Hindu brothers. Perhaps their peculiar social system and the self-sufficiency of the country fostered an outlook of isolation. When the British appeared on the scene they were not slow to take advantage of their spirit of isolation and turn it into a segregation so full and complete as effectively to cut us off from the rest of the world. So thorough was the blockade that we were kept in utter ignorance of the condition even of our immediate neighbours. The only contact vouchsafed to us was through London and only to the extent that suited the convenience of Great Britain. We saw the world through the British glasses.

The Musulmans, no doubt, did, now and then, disturb the placid surface of Indian indifference to developments outside. But his interest in world politics being mainly religious, the current of national thought flowed on as before. Isolation and segregation are no longer possible. Science has annihilated distance and removed barriers. The world has

come closer. Events in one part of the world have their immediate reflection in the other. The inter-dependence of problems in the different countries of the world has changed the entire conception of national politics. We stand to lose considerably if, without diverting our attention from problems at home, we do not take a practical interest in happenings and developments outside. In the conflict between Europe and Asia, Asia has been worsted because Europe could take concerted action against her peace-meal and defeat her in detail. The only hope of success in our efforts to check the forces of European Imperialism and Capitalism lies in Eastern nations coming closer and taking a more intimate interest in the problems facing them. Fortunately we are so placed that a part of our population has cultural affinity with countries in the West of Asia, while another has similar relationship with the countries lying in the East of the Continent. Our economic problems are also more or less similar. Common interest should therefore, facilitate the consummation of the scheme of an Asiatic Federation adumbrated by that great patriot Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das whom nature had endowed with an imagination to which Geographical barriers were no obstacles and a vision which encompassed all the races inhabiting Asia.

A happy beginning was made by the Congress in this direction by participating officially in the "Congress against Imperialism" held at Brussels, and by becoming associated with the 'League against Imperialism'. A more important and practical step taken by the Congress was the proposal of sending a mission to give medical relief and assistance to the people of China in their present struggle. The mission could not go as the Government of India refused to grant passports. The fact that the Government had to shift their ground twice in search of an excuse for the refusal clearly shows that the underlying motive of their decision was other than what was officially expressed. The plea that it would be a departure from an attitude of strict impartiality to allow a medical mission to go to the assistance of one or the other of the belligerents is certainly novel. It would, perhaps, have been nearer the truth had it been stated that

it would be a departure from an attitude of strict partiality. As a matter of fact it is neutrals alone who can send medical aid to belligerents without let and hindrance. Indeed this principle is the *raison d'être* of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies which have rendered help and assistance in the past. When advancing the plea the Government forgot that fifteen years ago they themselves had given passports to a similar mission sent to Turkey while Great Britain was neutral. It is futile to lodge protest, but such set backs should not deter us from persevering in our efforts.

I have taxed your patience by dwelling at such length on the problems of communal harmony and the unity of political parties for they are of the utmost importance for our national well-being at the present moment. There is, however, another subject which deserves the most serious attention of all those who have the love of India at heart. It might be urged that the problems of National Health, strictly speaking, does not fall within the purview of a political organisation and it is probably for this reason that it has, so far, not received that attention at the hands of the Indian National Congress which it deserves. It has such an important bearing on some of the most vital question connected with the future of our people as a self-governing nation that I think it is high time the Congress realised the importance in our national economy and directed its attention towards it.

It does not require any great powers of observation to notice that there is a general deterioration in our health which has become specially noticeable during the last 50 years. Without going into any elaborate details a mere comparison between the physique of a young man of the present generation and that of the young men of the past two generations will clearly establish the fact that there has been a steady decline. The men of the two generations perhaps less brainy, were comparatively more active possessed greatest power of endurance, were more courageous and less susceptible to disease. The contrast becomes more marked when we compare our level of general health with that of any other

country in the West. If we examine the cause of this deficiency they would resolve themselves into climatic, social, economic, educational and hygienic.

In a tropical climate, where the heat during the greater part of the year is intense, there is greater general realisation and quicker exhaustion of the system, hence, for the same number of hours of work a man is more fatigued in the tropics than in temperate and colder regions and yet the working day is longer in India than in the West. There being not enough rest or recreation the Indian worker has not much chance of recoupment while the drain on the system is kept up from day to day. This has a disastrous effect on the period of average life and on the standard of efficiency.

The evils of our peculiar social system are so well-known that it is not necessary for me to dilate upon them. Every work in the social cause knows the havoc played by seclusion and segregation of our female population, early marriages and rules confining the choice of marriage to a limited circle. The rigidity of the social rules affecting our domestic life is so cramping that it dwarfs the physical and mental growth of the family and has a particularly harmful on children. Nature is relentless in its revenge. If we defy the accepted laws of eugenics our common stock is bound to suffer.

The general economic condition of the workers in the fields and factories, who between themselves constitute more than three-fourths of the total population of the country, is such that it is with difficulty that they can keep body and soul together. They are overworked and under-paid, ill-fed, ill-clothed and badly-housed. Their power of resistance to disease is so low that they fall easy victims to the ravages of epidemics. Cholera, plague, influenza, small-pox and malaria claim their heavy toll of millions year after year.

The growing evil of drink threatens further to undermine not only the public health of the country, but our entire social structure. Forbidden by his religion to the Mussalman and held pernicious by the Hindu, the evil of drink would not have spread so rapidly and extensively had the Government taken a sympathetic attitude towards those who were endeavouring to it. On the contrary obstacles were

placed in the way of national workers who wished to eradicate the evil and hundred of young men who peacefully picketted liquor shops were sent to jail to pay the penalty of their reforming zeal. The arm of the law was used to "protect" the liberty of the citizen, to intoxicate others and to get intoxicated himself, in order to compensate him for the denial of liberty in the political sphere. Well might India complain "some are born drunkards, others contract the habit and some have drunkenness thrust upon them." The health of the nation may suffer, crime may increase, efficiency of the peasant and the labourer may decrease, their children may starve, but Prohibition cannot be introduced as the deficiency in the budget must be balanced. Is it too much to expect the Government to meet the wishes of the people at least in this matter by finding other means to satisfy the requirements of a balanced budget?

The conditions obtaining among the middle and the lower middle classes cause no less anxiety. With limited incomes and forces to maintain a higher standard of life in cities, where living is comparatively dearer, they suffer great hardship indeed. Their hand-to-mouth existence and consequent malnutrition together with residence in congested, unhealthy areas, make them particularly susceptible to tuberculosis. The appalling figures of infant mortality and deaths during child-birth, both in rural and urban areas, are matters of great concern and deserve our immediate attention.

These evils are aggravated by a lack of proper provision or health and hygiene. There is much room for improvement in our general standard of cleanliness both in relation to the person and the household. Houses should be built with better provisions for ventilation and light and with satisfactory sanitary arrangements. Villages and towns should be planned with due regard to water supply, sanitation and conservance arrangements. Stricter supervision of food-stuffs and better control of markets in every town and village, however small, is another crying need of the country. Medical relief should be organised on a wider scale. By these

methods alone can we bring under control all preventable diseases and eradicate them finally.

The question of public health and hygiene is intimately correlated with that of mass education. Unless the mass mind is prepared by process of suitable education it can neither appreciate nor carry out the most elementary and essential reforms affecting the health and happiness of the masses. Our Municipalities and Local Boards, inspite of the many restrictions placed on their powers, can still do a great deal to arrest the decline in physique of the people and raise the general level of the health of the nation.

I have so far discussed the question of national health in its relation to our disabilities, but making every allowance for them I cannot but deeply regret the general apathy and neglect shown towards the all-important question of physical culture. Even well-to-do people, who have both leisure and means, do not take much interest in it. This apathy was perhaps an inevitable result of the complete disarming of the nation and depriving its talents for military leadership. People were forced to rely on others for the defence of their homes and hearths. A spirit of dependence settled down on the nation. Old 'akharas' and gymnasia disappeared and with them the spirit of self-reliance, the very essence of national self-respect. Government shows a nervousness, difficult to appreciate, whenever the question is mooted that this emasculating general disarming of the people be put an end to and Indians given a chance to prepare themselves for the defence of their country. The fear that carrying of arms is likely to disturb the general peace and tranquility, is entirely baseless. There have been fewer breaches of the peace in Indian States where there is no Arms Act, than in British India where even sticks beyond regulation size may not be carried. Establishment of gymnasias and centres of physical culture, in fact, the entire question of national health turns on Finance. Private efforts, however well organised, cannot meet the needs of the situation. It is only by devoting a substantial portion of public revenues that such reforms of a real nation-building character can be taken in hand. Sixty per cent, of the revenues of India is absorbed by the Military

Department in the name of the Defence of the country, but the Government ought to know that there can be no defence of the country when people are allowed to exist in such a state of utter physical degeneration. The defence of the country does not lie in building costly block houses and erecting fortifications, now even in procuring expensive armament or the mechanisation of the Army. Money can make trenches but men alone can man them. The defence of the country lies in tackling the problem of manhood and improving the general health of the nation.

In conclusion, I wish to urge that the country should lose no time in preparing itself for the next move forward. I urge that all our energies and resources be concentrated on fighting the enemy residing inside our body politic, namely communal and political discord. I beseech Hindus and Mussalmans to accept the settlement of the Congress, which is just and fair to both, and to sink their differences. I press for an immediate and countrywide reorganisation of the Congress and cordially invite all communities and political parties to join the national organisation in a body in order to strengthen it and make it truly representative and national. I appeal to all those who still desire to go to the Councils to close their ranks and form one People's Party of Opposition on the basis of the Congress Programme. I strongly advise the Congress and the country to stand aside and have nothing whatever to do with Statutory Commission. I reiterate the demand of the Congress for a Round Table Conference of Indian and British representatives with plenipotentiary powers as the only method in which we could co-operate with Great Britain regarding the settlement of the future of India. I recommend the speedy preparation of the future Constitution of India and the calling of a National Convention for its adoption. I suggest to my people that we should consider Indian problems in their international setting and cultivate cultural relations and maintain friendly contact with Asiatic countries. I call upon my countrymen not to relax their efforts until they have secured the release of the detainees of Bengal and made repetition of a similar outrage on the elementary rights of citizenship impossible. I draw

the attention of the country to the alarming condition of our National Health and earnestly appeal that effective measures be devised to check the causes which are leading to its steady deterioration. These, in my opinion, are the lines on which we can weld India into a nation with an irresistible and determination to conquer all obstacles in the way of the realisation of its great Ideal and occupy its proper place among the Nations of the World.

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### MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD, 1940

In 1923 you elected me President of this National Assembly. For the second time, after seventeen years, you have once again conferred upon me the same honour. Seventeen years is not a long period in the history of national struggles. But now the pace of events and world change is so rapid that our old standards no longer apply. During these last seventeen years we have passed through many stages, one after another. We had a long journey before us and it was inevitable that we should pass through several stages. We rested at many a point no doubt, but never stopped. We surveyed and examined every prospect, but we were not ensured by it and passed on. We faced many ups and downs, but always our faces were turned towards the goal. The world may have doubted our intentions and determination but we never had a moment's doubt. Our path was full of difficulties and at every step we were faced with great obstacles. It may be that we did not proceed as rapidly as we desired, but we did not flinch from marching forward. If we look back upon the period between 1923 and 1940, nineteen-twenty-three will appear to us a faded landmark in the distance. In 1923 we desired to reach our goal, but the goal was so distant then that even the milestones were hidden from



our eyes. Raise your eyes to-day and look ahead. Not only do you see the milestones clearly, but the goal itself is not distant. But this is evident that the nearer we get to the goal the more intense does our struggle become. Although the rapid march of events has taken us further from our old landmark and brought us nearer our goal, yet it has created new troubles and difficulties for us. To-day our caravan is passing a very critical stage. The essential difficulty of such a critical period lies in its conflicting possibilities. It is very probable that a correct step may bring us very near our goal, and on the other hand, a false step may land us in fresh troubles and difficulties.

At such a critical juncture you have elected me President and thus demonstrated the great confidence you have in one of your co-workers. It is a great honour and a great responsibility. I am grateful for the honour and crave your support in shouldering the responsibility. I am confident that the fullness of your confidence in me will be a measure of the fullness of the support that I shall continue to receive.

I think that I should now come straight to the real problem before us without further delay.

The first and the most important question before us is this : Whither is the step taken by us in consequence of the declaration of War on the 3rd September, 1939, leading us ? And where do we stand now ?

Probably in the history of the Congress, the 1936 session at Lucknow marked a new ideological phase, when the Congress passed a long resolution on the international situation and placed its viewpoint clearly and categorically before the public. After this a consideration of the international situation and a resolution thereon, became an essential and integral part of the annual declarations of the Congress. Thus this decision on this subject was arrived at and placed before the world with full deliberation. These resolutions embodied at one and the same time, two declarations to the world : Firstly, we stated, what I have described as a new ideology in Indian politics, that we could not remain in isolation from the political events of the outside world, even in our present state of helplessness. It was essential that while we forged our

way ahead and fashioned our future we must not confine ourselves merely to our own surroundings but should keep a vigilant watch on the conditions of the outside world. Innumerable changes in the world have brought countries and nations nearer to one another, so that the waves of thought and action, rising in one corner of the world, flow and produce immediate reactions in other places. It is therefore impossible to-day for India to consider her problems while confining herself within her own four walls. It is inevitable that events in the outside world should have their repercussions in India ; it is equally inevitable that our decisions and the conditions prevailing in India should affect the rest of the world. It was this consciousness and belief which brought about our decisions. We declared by these resolutions against reactionary movements like Fascism and Nazism which were directed against democracy and individual and national freedom. These movements were gaining strength day by day and India regarded this as the greatest danger to world progress and peace. India's head and heart were with those peoples who were standing up for democracy and freedom and resisting this wave of reaction.

But while we were considering the dangers arising from Fascism and Nazism, it was impossible for us to forget the older danger which has been proved to be infinitely more fatal to the peace and freedom of nations than these new dangers and which has in fact supplied the basis for this reaction. I refer to British imperialism. We are not distant spectators of this imperialism, as we are of the new reactionary movements. It has taken possession of our house and dominates over us. It was for this reason that we stated in clear terms that if new entanglements in Europe brought about war, India, which has been debarred from exercising her will and making free decisions, will not take any part in it. She could only consider this question when she had acquired the right of coming to decisions according to her own free will and choice.

India cannot endure the prospect of Nazism and Fascism, but she is even more tired of British imperialism. If India remains deprived of her natural right to freedom

this would clearly mean that British imperialism continued to flourish with all its traditional characteristics and under such conditions, India would on no account be prepared to lend a helping hand for the triumph of British imperialism. This was the second declaration which was constantly emphasized through these resolutions. These resolutions were repeatedly passed from the Lucknow session onwards till August, 1939 and are known by the name of "War Resolutions."

All these declarations of the Congress were before the British Government when suddenly, in the third week of August 1939, the war clouds gathered and thundered and, at the beginning of September, war began.

At this stage I will ask you to pause for a moment and look back. What were the conditions prevailing in August last ?

The Government of India Act of 1935 was imposed upon India forcibly by the British Government and, as usual, resorting to the old stratagem, it tried to make the world believe that it had conferred a big instalment of India's national right upon her. The world knows the decision of the Congress to reject this Act. Nevertheless the Congress decided to avoid a conflict at that stage and preferred a respite. It resolved to take charge of Provincial Governments on a certain definite condition. After this decision the Congress Ministries were functioning successfully in eight out of the eleven Provinces, and it was in the interest of Great Britain herself to maintain this state of affairs for as long a period as possible. There was yet another factor. So far as the War was concerned, India had clearly condemned Nazi Germany. Her sympathies were with the democratic nations, and this was a point in Britain's favour. Under such circumstances, it was natural to expect that if the British Government had changed its old imperialistic mentality in the slightest degree, it would, even though as a measure of expediency, change its old methods at this juncture and afford an opportunity to India to feel that she was breathing in a changed atmosphere. But we all know how the British Government behaved in this matter. There was not even a shadow of change discernable in its methods. Its policy was dictated exactly in

accordance with the habits of an imperialist a hundred and fifty years old. It decided its course of action and, without India being afforded in any manner and in the slightest degree an opportunity to declare freely her opinion, her participation in the War was announced. It was not even considered necessary to give those representative assemblies, imposed upon us by British diplomacy for purposes of show, an opportunity of expressing their opinion.

The whole world knows, and so do we, how all the Empire countries were given freedom of decision; the representative assemblies of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland, all of them arrived at an independent decision, in regard to their participation in the War, without the least outside interference. Not only this, but when Ireland decided to remain neutral, no surprise was shown, nor was a single voice raised against it in Great Britain. Mr. De Valera, in the very shadow of England, refused to extend his help to Britain in the War unless the question of Ulster was settled to his satisfaction.

But what place did India occupy in this picture of the British Commonwealth? India is being told to-day that the generous hand of Britain will confer upon her the precious gift of Dominion Status in the near but unknown future. When the war began, a war which will probably be one of the greatest in the world, India was pushed into it suddenly without her even realising that she was entering it. This fact alone was sufficient to show us which way the wind was blowing. But there was no need for us to hurry. Other opportunities were to come and the time was not distant when we could see the face of British Imperialism even more unmasked and at closer quarters.

When in 1914 the first spark was ignited in a corner of the Balkans, England and France raised the cry of the rights of small nations. Later, President Wilson's Fourteen Points came into view; their fate is well-known to the world. On that occasion the situation was different. After the last war, England and France, intoxicated with victory, adopted a course of action which necessarily resulted in a reaction. This reaction grew. It took the shape of Fascism in Italy,

and Nazism in Germany and unrestrained dictatorships, based on brute force, challenged the peace and freedom of the world. When this happened inevitably the world aligned itself in two rival camps; one supporting democracy and freedom; the other encouraging the forces of reaction. And in this way, a new picture of the coming war began to take shape. Mr. Chamberlain's Government, to which the existence of Soviet Russia was much more unbearable than the existence of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany and which considered Russia to be a living challenge to British imperialism, continued to watch this situation for three years. Not only this, but by its attitude it clearly and repeatedly encouraged Fascist and Nazi ambitions. Abyssinia, Spain, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Albania, disappeared as free countries, one after the other, from the map of the world. And Great Britain, by her vacillating policy, continually assisted in the destruction of their freedom. But when this course of action produced its natural and ultimate result and Nazi Germany marched ahead unchecked, the British Government found itself compelled to enter the arena of war. Had it not done so then, the power of Germany would have become an intolerable menace to British imperialism. Now the new slogans of freedom, world peace, democracy, took the place of the old cry of saving the smaller nations, and the whole world began to ring with these cries. The declaration of war on the 3rd September by Britain and France was made to the accompaniment of the resounding echoes of these slogans. The peoples of the world were bewildered and harassed by the brutal trial of strength and the world-wide unrest created by these new reactionary forces, and they lent a willing ear to the siren voices of these slogans.

War was declared on the 3rd of September and on the 7th September the All-India Congress Working Committee met at Wardha to deliberate upon the situation. What did the Working Committee do on this occasion?

All the declarations of the Congress made since 1936 were before it. It had also to face the action taken by the British Government in declaring India as a belligerent

country. Undoubtedly the Congress could not have been blamed had it come to a final decision in accordance with the logic of the situation. But it continued to keep vigilant watch on its mind and heart: it resisted the natural urge of the moment for an acceleration of peace; it deliberated upon every aspect of the matter, unemotionally and dispassionately, and took the step which to-day entitles India to raise her head and say to the world that this was the only correct step which could have been then taken. The Congress postponed its final decisions and asked the British Government to state its war aims, for on this depended not only peace and justice for India, but for the whole world. If India was being invited to participate in this war, she had a right to know why this war was being fought. What was its object? If the result of this grim tragedy was not to be the same as that of the last war, and if it was really being fought to safeguard freedom, Democracy and peace and to bring a new order to the world, then in all conscience, India had a right to know, what would be the effect of these aims on her own destiny.

The Working Committee formulated this demand in a long statement which was published on the 14th September, 1939. If I express the hope that this statement will occupy an outstanding place in recent Indian history, I am sure I am not claiming too much of the future historian. This is a simple but irrefutable document, based on truth and reason, and it can only be set aside by the arrogant pride of armed force. Though this cry was raised in India, in fact it was not of India only, but it was the agonised cry of wronged humanity, whose hopes had so often before been betrayed. Twenty-five years ago the world was plunged into one of the biggest infernos of death and destruction known to history, and yet this was but a preparation for a still bigger catastrophe. The world was bewitched and its hopes were kindled by cries of freedom for small nations, collective security, self-determination, disarmament, League of Nations, and international arbitration, and of similar high sounding phrases. But what was the result in the end? Every cry proved false; every vision that seemed so real

to us, vanished as a dream. Again nations are being plunged into the blood and fire of war. Should we part with reason and reality so completely as not even to ask why this is being done and how this affects our destiny before plunging into this deluge of death and destruction ?

In answer to this demand of the Congress a regular series of statements were made on behalf of the British Government, both in England and in India. The first link of series was the Delhi declaration of the Viceroy, dated the 17th October. This lengthy statement is perhaps a finished example of that peculiarly involved and tiring style which characterises the official literature of the Government of India. After reading page after page of this statement, the curtain is at last lifted with hesitation. We have a glimpse. We are told then that if we want to know the war aims we must read a speech by the Prime Minister of Britain, and this speech deals only with the peace of Europe and with the adjustment of international relations. Even the words "Freedom" and "Democracy" are not to be found in the Viceroy's statement. So far as India is concerned, it only reaffirms the policy laid down in the preamble of 1919 Act, which is now embodied in the 1935 Act. To-day that policy continues to be the same ; there is nothing to add to it or to improve it.

On the 17th of October, 1939, the statement of the Viceroy was published and the Working Committee met to deliberate upon it on the 22nd October at Wardha. Without any discussion it came to the conclusion that this reply could under no circumstances be considered satisfactory, and that it should now unhesitatingly give the decision, which it had postponed till then. The decision of the Working Committee was as follows :

"In the circumstances, the Committee cannot possibly give any support to Great Britain, for it would amount to an endorsement of the imperialistic policy which the Congress has always sought to end. As a first step in this direction, the Committee call upon the Congress Ministries to tender their resignations."

As a result of this decision the Congress Ministries in eight Provinces resigned.

This was but the first step which the Congress took in the series of events. Now we have to see to what these events led. The communique of the Viceroy issued on the 5th February from Delhi giving the resume of the talk between him and Mahatma Gandhi, and Mahatma Gandhi's statement of the 5th February may be regarded as the last of this series. We all know the substance of the Viceroy's statement. The British Government, it is stated, fully desires that India should, in the shortest time possible under the circumstances, attain the status of a British dominion, and that the transition period should be as short as possible. But it is unwilling to concede to India the right of framing her own constitution and deciding her own destiny through her own elected representatives without outside interference. In other words, the British Government does not accept the position that India has got the right of self-determination.

At the first touch of reality the structure of make-believe fell to pieces. For the last four years the world resounded with cries of democracy and freedom. The utterances of the most responsible spokesmen of England and France in this regard are so fresh in our memory as not to need recall. But the moment India raised this question, the reality behind these utterances was unveiled. Now we are told that, without doubt safeguarding the freedom of nations is the aim of this war, but that this is confined within the geographical limits of Europe. The peoples of Asia and Africa should not dare to have any such hopes. Mr. Chamberlain has made this even more clear in his Birmingham speech of the 24th February, though we never had any doubts about the matter. He confirmed the British Government's action by his words. Proclaiming British war aims, he stated that they were fighting to secure that small nations in Europe shall henceforth live in security, free from the constant threat of aggression against their independence.

Though this answer about war aims has been given through a British spokesman, yet in reality it interprets the real mentality of Europe as a whole, which has been known to the world for the last two hundred years. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries whatever principles were



accepted for individual and collective human freedom, the right to claim them and to benefit from them was limited to European nations. And even amongst them, its application was confined to the Christian nations of Europe. To-day, in the middle of the twentieth century, the world has so changed that the thoughts and actions of the last century read like ancient history, and appear to us as faded landmarks in the distance. But we will have to admit that there is at least one distinctive landmark of Europe emphasizing rights which has not faded and is still with us. We have not passed it yet, or achieved those rights.

This reality has been brought home to us again by the problem of our own political and national rights in India. When, after the declaration of war, we raised the question of war aims and their effect on India's destiny, we were not forgetful of British policy in 1917 and 1919. We wanted to know how in the year 1939, when the world was covering the track of centuries in the course of days, England looked at India. Had that look changed? We were given a clear reply that it had not; even now there was no change in that imperialist outlook. We are told to believe that the British Government is very desirous that India should attain the status of a dominion in the shortest possible period. We knew even before that the British Government had expressed this desire. Now we know that they are very anxious indeed.

But it is not a question of the desire or of the measure of the desire of the British Government. The straight and simple question is of India's right; whether she is entitled to determine her own fate or not. On the answer to this question depend the answer to all other questions of the day. This question forms the foundation stone of the Indian problem, India will not allow it to be removed, for if it is displaced, the whole structure of Indian nationalism will collapse.

So far as the question of war is concerned our position is quite clear. We see the face of British imperialism as clearly now as we did in the last war, and we are not prepared to assist in its triumph by participating in the War.

Our case is crystal clear. We do not wish to see British imperialism triumphant and stronger and thus lengthen the period of our own subjection to it. We absolutely refuse to do so. Our way lies patently in the opposite direction. Where do we stand to-day ?

Let us return to our starting point and consider once again whither the step that we took after the declaration of war on the 3rd September is leading us. Where do we stand to-day ? The answer to both these questions is by this time apparent to your minds and is hovering on your lips. It is not even necessary that your lips should tell me for I feel the quivering of your hearts. The step of temporary and partial co-operation which we took in 1937, we withdrew after the declaration of war. Inevitably we inclined towards further steps in non-co-operation. As we stand to-day, we have to decide whether we should march forward in this direction or go backward. When once a step is taken, there is no stopping. To cry halt, is to go back, and we refuse to go back. We can only, therefore, go forward. I am sure that the voice of every one of you joins mine when I proclaim that we must and will go forward.

In this connection one question naturally faces us. It is the verdict of history that in a struggle between nations, no power forgoes its possessions unless compelled to do so. Principles of reason and morality have affected the conduct of individuals, but have not affected the selfish conduct of Powers that dominate. To-day even in the middle of the twentieth century, we witness how the new reactionary forces in Europe have shattered man's faith in individual and collective human rights. In place of justice and reason, brute force has become the sole argument in the determination of rights. But while the world is presenting this depressing picture, there is another side, the hopeful side, which cannot be ignored. We see countless millions all over the world, without any distinction, awakening to a new consciousness which is spreading everywhere with great rapidity. This new consciousness is tired of the utter hopelessness of the old order, and is impatient for a new order based on reason, justice and peace. This new awakening which arose

after the last War and took root in the deepest recesses of the human soul, has now come to dominate men's minds and their utterances. Perhaps there is no parallel in history to the speed of this awakening.

In these circumstances was it beyond the realm of possibility that history should, contrary to its old record, take a new step? Was it impossible that two great peoples of the world, who had been tied together by the course of events as rulers and ruled, should create a new relationship between them, based on reason, justice and peace? If that had been possible, the sorrows born of world war would have given place to a new-born hope; and the new order of reason and justice would have ushered in a new dawn. If the British people could have proudly said to the world to-day that they had added such a new example to history, what a vast and unparalleled triumph this would have been for humanity. Certainly this was not an impossibility, but it was an amazingly difficult thing to do.

In the prevailing darkness of the times, it is faith in the bright side of human nature which sustains the great soul of Mahatma Gandhi. He is always prepared to take advantage of every opening which might lead to a mutual settlement without feeling that he is weakening his unassailable position.

Since war began, several members of the British Cabinet have tried to make the world believe that the old order of British imperialism has ended, and that to-day the British nation has no other aims except those of peace and justice. Which country could have more warmly acclaimed such a declaration than India? But the fact is that in spite of these declarations British imperialism stands in the way of peace and justice to-day exactly as it did before the war. The Indian demand was the touch-stone for all such claims. They were so tested and found to be counterfeit and untrue.

I have briefly placed before you the real question of the day. That is the vital question for us, all else are subsidiary to it. It was in relation to that question that the Congress put forward its invitation to the British Government in September last, and made a clear and simple demand, to

which no community or group could possibly object. It was not in our remotest thoughts that the communal question could be raised in this connection. We realise that there are some groups in the country which cannot keep step with the Congress in the political struggle or go as far as the Congress is prepared to go; we know that some do not agree with the method of direct action which the great majority of political India has adopted. But so far as the right of the Indian people to independence is concerned and the full admission of India's birthright to freedom, an awakened and impatient India has passed far beyond the early stages, and none dare oppose our demand. Even those classes who cling to their special interests and fear change lest this might affect them adversely, are rendered helpless by the spirit of the times. They have to admit and to agree to the goal we have set before us.

A time of crisis is a testing time for all of us, and so the great problem of the day has tested us and exposed many an aspect of our present day politics. It has laid bare also the reality that lies behind the communal problem. Repeated attempts were made, both in England and India, to mix up the communal question with the vital political question of the day and thus to confuse the real issue. Again and again it was sought to convince the world that the problem of the minorities barred the way to a proper solution of India's political problem.

For a hundred and fifty years British imperialism has pursued the policy of divide and rule, and by emphasizing internal differences, sought to use various groups for the consolidation of its own power. That was the inevitable result of India's political subjection, and it is folly for us to complain and grow bitter. A foreign Government can never encourage internal unity in the subject country, for disunity is the surest guarantee for the continuance of its own domination. But when we were told, and the world was asked to believe that British imperialism had ended, and the long chapter of Indian history dominated by it had closed, was it unreasonable for us to expect that British statesmen would at last give up this evil inheritance and not

exploit the communal situation for political ends? But the time for this is yet distant; we may not cling to such vain hopes. So the last five months with their succession of events have established. Imperialism, in spite of all assurances to the contrary, still flourishes; it has yet to be ended.

But whatever the roots of our problems might be, it is obvious that India, like other countries, has her internal problems. Of these, the communal problem is an important one. We do not and cannot expect the British Government to deny its existence. The communal problem is undoubtedly with us, and if we want to go ahead, we must needs take it into account. Every step that we take by ignoring it will be a wrong step. The problem is there; to admit its existence, however, does not mean that it should be used as a weapon against India's national freedom. British Imperialism has always exploited it to this end. If Britain desires to end her imperialistic methods in India and close that dismal chapter of history, then the first signs of this change must naturally appear in her treatment of the communal problem.

What is the Congress position in regard to this problem? It has been the claim of the Congress, from its earliest beginnings, that it considers India as a nation and takes every step in the interest of the nation as a whole. This entitles the world to examine this claim strictly and the Congress must establish the truth of its assertion. I wish to examine afresh this question from this point of view.

There can be only three aspects of the communal problem: its existence, its importance, and the method of its solution.

The entire history of the Congress demonstrates that it has always acknowledged the existence of the problem. It has never tried to minimise its importance. In dealing with this problem, it followed a policy which was the most suitable under the circumstances. It is difficult to conceive of a different or better course of action, if, however, a better course could be suggested, the Congress was always, and is to-day eager to welcome it.

We could attach no greater importance to it, than to make it the first condition for the attainment of our national goal. The Congress has always held this belief; no one can challenge this fact. It has always held to two basic principles in this connection, and every step was taken deliberately with these in view.

(1) Whatever constitution is adopted for India, there must be the fullest guarantees in it for the rights and interests of minorities.

(2) The minorities should judge for themselves what safeguards are necessary for the protection of the rights and interests. The majority should not decide this. Therefore the decision in this respect must depend upon the consent of the minorities and not on a majority vote.

The question of the minorities is not a special Indian problem. It has existed in other parts of the world. I venture to address the world from this platform, and to enquire whether any juster and more equitable course of action can be adopted in this connection, than the one suggested above? If so, what is it? Is there any thing lacking in this approach, which necessitates that the Congress be reminded of its duty? The Congress has always been ready to consider any failure in the discharge of its duty. It is so prepared to-day, I have in the Congress for the last nineteen years. During the whole of this period there is not a single important decision of the Congress in the shaping of which I have not had the honour to participate. I assert that during these last nineteen years not for a single day did the Congress think of solving this problem in any way other than the way I have stated above. This was not a mere assertion of the Congress, but its determined and decided course of action. Many a time during the last fifteen years, this policy was subjected to the severest tests, but it stood firm as a rock.

The manner in which the Congress has dealt with this problem to-day in connection with the Constituent Assembly throws a flood of light on this two principles and clarifies them. The recognised minorities have a right, if they so please, to choose their representatives by their votes. Their representatives will not have to rely upon the votes of any

other community except thier own. So far as the question of the rights and the interests of the minorities is concerned, the decision will not depend upon the majority of the votes in the Constituent Assembly. It will be subject to the consent of the minority. If unanimity is not achieved on any question, then an impartial tribunal, to which the minorities have also consented, will decide the matter. This last proviso is merely in the nature of a provision for a possible contingency, and is most unlikely to be required. If a more practical proposal is made, there can be no objection to it.

When these principles are accepted and acted upon the Congress, what is that obliges British statesmen to remind us so often of the problem of the minorities, and to make the world believe that this stands in the way of Indian freedom ? If it is really so, why does not the British Government recognise clearly India's freedom and give us an opportunity to solve this problem for ever by mutual agreement amongst ourselves ?

Dissensions were sown and encouraged amongst us, and yet we are taunted because of them. We are told to put an end to our communal conflicts, but opportunity to do so is denied us. Such is the position deliberately created to thwart us ; such are the chains that bind. But no difficulties or constraints can deter us from taking the right steps with courage and fortitude. Our path is full of obstacles but we are determined to overcome them.

We have considered the problem of the minorities of India. But are the Muslims such a minority as to have the least doubt or fear about their future ? A small minority legitimately have fears and apprehensions, but can the Muslims allow themselves to be disturbed by them ? I do not know how many of you are familiar with my writings, twenty-eight years ago, in the "Al Hilal." If there are any such here, I would request them to refresh their memories. Even then I gave expression to my conviction, and repeat this to-day, that in the texture of Indian politics, nothing is further removed from the truth than to say that Indian Muslims occupy the position of a political minority. It is

equally absurd for them to be apprehensive about their rights and interests in a democratic India. This fundamental mistake has opened the door to countless misunderstandings. False arguments were built upon wrong premises. This error, on the one hand, brought confusion into the minds of Mussalmans about their own true position and on the other hand, it involved the world in misunderstandings, so that the picture of India could not be seen in right perspective.

If time had permitted, I would have told you in detail, how during the last sixty years, this artificial and untrue picture of India was made, and whose hands traced it. In effect this was the result of the same policy of divide and rule which took particular shape in the minds of British officialdom in India after the Congress launched the national movement. The object of this was to prepare the Mussalmans for use against the new political awakening. In this plan, prominence was given to two points. First: that India was inhabited by two different communities, the Hindus and the Musalmans, and for this reason no demand could be made in the name of a united nation. Second: that numerically the Mussalmans were far less than the Hindus, and because of this, the necessary consequence of the establishment of democratic institutions in India would be to establish the rule of the Hindu majority and to jeopardise the existence of the Muslims. I shall not go into any greater detail now. Should you, however, wish to know the early history of this matter, I would refer you to the time of Lord Dufferin, a former Viceroy of India, and Sir Auckland Colvin, a former Lieutenant Governor of the N. W. P., now the United Provinces.

Thus were sown the seeds of the disunity by British Imperialism on Indian soil. The plant grew and was nurtured and spread its nettles, and even though fifty years have passed since then, the roots are still there.

Politically speaking, the word minority does not mean just a group that is numerically smaller and therefore entitled to special protection. It means a group that is so small in number and so lacking in other qualities that give strength,



that it has no confidence in its own capacity to protect itself from the much larger group that surrounds it. It is not enough that the group should be relatively the smaller, but that it should be absolutely so small as to be incapable of protecting its interests. Thus this is not merely a question of numbers: other factors count also. If a country has two major groups numbering a million and two millions respectively, it does not necessarily follow that because one is half the other, therefore it must call itself politically a minority and consider itself weak.

If this is the right test, let us apply it to the position of the Muslims in India. You will see at a glance a vast concourse, spreading out all over the country; they stand erect and to imagine that they exist helplessly as a "minority" is to delude oneself.

The Muslims in India number between eighty and ninety millions. The same type of social or racial divisions which affect other communities, do not divide them. The powerful bonds of Islamic brotherhood and equality have protected them to a large extent from the weakness that flows from social divisions. It is true that they number only one-fourth of the total population; but the question is not one of population ratio, but of the large numbers and the strength behind them. Can such a vast mass of humanity have any legitimate reason for apprehension that in a free and democratic India, it might be unable to protect its rights and interests?

These numbers are not confined to any particular area, but spread out unevenly over different parts of the country. In four provinces out of eleven in India there is a Muslim majority, the other religious groups being minorities. If British Baluchistan is added, there are five provinces with Muslim majorities. Even if we are compelled at present to consider this question on a basis of religious groupings, the position of the Muslims is not that of a minority only. If they are in a minority in seven provinces, they are in a majority in five. This being so, there is absolutely no reason why they should be oppressed by the feeling of being a minority.

Whatever may be the details of the future constitution of India, we know that it will be an all-India Federation which is, in the fullest sense, democratic, and every unit of which will have autonomy in regard to internal affairs. The federal centre will be concerned only with all-India matters of common concern such as, foreign relations, defence, customs, etc. Under these circumstances, can any one who has any conception of the actual working of a democratic constitution allow himself to be led astray by this false issue of majority and minority? I cannot believe for an instant that there can be any room whatever for these misgivings in the picture of India's future. These apprehensions are arising because in the words of a British statesman regarding Ireland, we are yet standing on the banks of the river and though wishing to swim, are unwilling to enter the water. There is only one remedy; we should take the plunge fearlessly. No sooner is this done we shall realise that all our apprehensions were without foundations.

It is now nearly thirty years since I first attempted to examine this question as an Indian Mussalman. The majority of the Muslims then were keeping completely apart from the political struggle and they were influenced by the same mentality of aloofness and antagonism which prevailed amongst them previously in the year 1888. This depressing atmosphere did not prevent me from giving my anxious thought to this matter, and I reached quickly a final conclusion, which influenced my belief and action. I saw India with all her many burdens, marching ahead to her future destiny. We were fellow-passengers in this boat and we could not ignore its swift passage through the waters; and so it became necessary for us to come to a clear and final decision about our plan of action. How were we to do so? Not merely by skimming the surface of the problem, but by going down to its roots, and then to consider our position. I did so and I realised that the solution of the whole problem depended on the answer to one question: Do we, Indian Mussalmans view the free India of the future with suspicion and distrust or with courage and confidence. If we view it with fear and suspicion, then undoubtedly we have to follow

a different path. No present declaration, no promise for the future, no constitutional safeguards, can be a remedy for our doubts and fears. We are then forced to tolerate the existence of a third power. This third power is already entrenched here and has no intention of withdrawing, and if we follow this path of fear, we must needs look forward to its continuance. But if we are convinced that for us fear and doubt have no place and that we must view the future with courage and confidence in ourselves, then our course of action becomes absolutely clear. We find ourselves in a new world, which is free from the dark shadows of doubt, vacillation, inaction and apathy, and where the light of faith and determination, action and enthusiasm never fails. The confusions of the times, the ups and downs that come our way, the difficulties that beset our thorny path, cannot change the direction of our steps. It becomes our bounden duty then to march with assured steps to India's national goal.

I arrived at this definite conclusion without the least hesitation, and every fibre of my being revolted against the former alternative. I could not bear the thought of it. I could not conceive it possible for a Mussalman to tolerate this, unless he has rooted out the spirit of Islam from every corner of his being.

I started the "Al-Hilal" in 1912 and put this conclusion of mine before the Muslims of India. I need not remind you that my cries were not without effect. The period from 1912 to 1918 marked a new phase in the political awakening of the Muslims. Towards the end of 1920 on my release after four years of internment I found that the political ideology of the Mussalmans had broken through its old mould and was taking another shape. Twenty years have gone by and much has happened since then. The tide of events has ever risen higher, and fresh waves of thought have enveloped us. But this fact still remains unchanged, that the general opinion amongst the Muslims is opposed to going back.

That is certain ; they are not prepared to retrace their steps. But again they are full of doubts about their future path. I am not going into the reasons for that ; I shall only try to understand the effects. I would remind my co-religionists

that to-day I stand exactly where I stood in 1912 when I addressed them on this issue. I have given thought to all those innumerable occurrences which have happened since then, my eyes have watched them, my mind has pondered over them. Those events did not merely pass me by; I was in the midst of them, a participant, and I examined every circumstance with care. I cannot be false to what I have myself seen and observed. I cannot quarrel with my own convictions; I cannot stifle the voice of my conscience. I repeat to-day what I had said throughout this entire period, that the 90 millions of Muslims of India have no other right course of action than the one to which I invited them in 1912.

Some of my co-religionists, who paid heed to my call in 1912, are in disagreement with me to-day. I do not wish to find fault with them, but I would make appeal to their sincerity and sense of responsibility. We are dealing with the destinies of peoples and nations. We cannot come to right conclusions if we are swept away by the passions of the moment. We must base our judgments on the solid realities of life. It is true that the sky is overcast to-day and the outlook is dark. The Muslims have to come into the light of reality. Let them examine every aspect of the matter again to-day, and they will find no other course of action open to them.

I am a Mussalman and am proud of that fact. Islam's splendid traditions of thirteen hundred years are my inheritance. I am unwilling to lose even the smallest part of this inheritance. The teaching and history of Islam, its arts and letters and civilisation are my wealth and my fortune. It is my duty to protect them.

As a Mussalman I have a special interest in Islamic religion and culture and I cannot tolerate any interference with them. But in addition to these sentiments, I have others also which the realities and conditions of my life have forced upon me. The spirit of Islam does not come in the way of these sentiments; it guides and helps me forward. I am proud of being an Indian. I am a part of the indivisible unity that is Indian nationality. I am indispensable to this

noble edifice and without me this splendid structure of India is incomplete. I am an essential element which has gone to build India. I can never surrender this claim.

It was India's historic destiny that many human races and cultures and religions should flow to her, finding a home in her hospitable soil, and that many a caravan should find rest here. Even before the dawn of history, these caravans trekked into India and wave after wave of new-comers followed. This vast and fertile land gave welcome to all and took them to her bosom. One of the last these caravans, following the footsteps of its predecessors, was that of the followers of Islam. This came here and settled here for good. This led to a meeting of the culture-currents of two different races. Like the Ganga and Jumna, they flowed for a while through separate courses, but nature's immutable law brought them together and joined them in a 'sangam'. This fusion was a notable event in history. Since then, destiny, in her own hidden way, began to fashion a new India in place of the old. We brought our treasures with us, and India too was full of the riches of her own precious heritage. We gave our wealth to her and she unlocked the doors of her own treasures to us. We gave her what she needed most, the most precious of gifts from Islam's treasury, the message of democracy and human equality.

Full eleven centuries have passed by since then. Islam has now as great a claim on the soil of India as Hinduism. If Hinduism has been the religion of the people here for several thousands of years, Islam also has been their religion for a thousand years. Just as a Hindu can say with pride that he is an Indian and follows Hinduism, so also we can say with equal pride that we are Indians and follow Islam. I shall enlarge this orbit still further. The Indian Christian is equally entitled to say with pride that he is an Indian and is following a religion of India, namely Christianity.

Eleven hundred years of common history have enriched India with our common achievements. Our languages, our poetry, our literature, our culture, our art, our dress, our manners and customs, the innumerable happenings of our daily life, everything bears the stamp of our joint endeavour.

There is indeed no aspect of our life which has escaped this stamp. Our languages were different, but we grew to use a common language; our manners and customs were dissimilar, but they acted on each others and thus produced a new synthesis. Our old dress may be seen only in ancient pictures of by-gone days, no one wears it to-day. The joint wealth is the heritage of our common nationality and we do not want to leave it and go back to the times when this joint life had not begun. If there are any Hindus amongst us who desire to bring back the Hindu life of a thousand years ago and more, they dream, and such dreams are vain fantasies. So also if there are any Muslims who wish to revive their past civilization and culture, which they brought a thousand years ago from Iran and Central Asia, they dream also and the sooner they wake up the better. These are unnatural fancies which cannot take root in the soil of reality. I am one of those who believe that revival may be a necessity in a religion, but in social matters it is a denial of progress.

This thousand years of our joint life has moulded us into a common nationality. This cannot be done artificially. Nature does her fashioning through her hidden processes in the course of centuries. The cast has now been moulded and destiny has set her seal upon it. Whether we like it or not, we have now become an Indian nation, united and indivisible. No fantasy or artificial scheming to separate and divide can break this unity. We must accept the logic of fact and history, and engage ourselves in the fashioning of our future destiny.

I shall not take any more of your time. My address must end now. But before I do so, permit me to remind you that our success depends upon three factors: unity, discipline and full confidence in Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. The glorious past record of our movement was due to his great leadership, and it is only under his leadership that we can look forward to a future of successful achievement.

The time of our trial is upon us. We have already focussed the world's attention. Let us endeavour to prove ourselves worthy.

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